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Book: Crime and Punishment

Topic: *Understanding Mental Conflict and Moral Dilemma in Crime and Punishment: A Psychological Approach*

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Dedication

This work is dedicated, above all, to my godparents, who have supported me throughout my university career. Thank you for the advice and motivation you have given me to this day. Thank you, godparents, for always believing in me, for your affection, for encouraging me to pursue my goals even when the road gets tough. Without your support, I do not know what would have become of me. This achievement is not only mine, but also yours, for being by my side and reminding me that every step I take is worth it.

Abstract

This research analyzes the psychological evolution of Raskolnikov, the main character in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. The research explores the following question: How does Dostoevsky use Raskolnikov's search for meaning to represent human struggles with right, wrong, and personal responsibility? The "participant" in this study is Raskolnikov himself, whose actions, thoughts, and feelings are analyzed as authentic psychological data. A qualitative analysis based on triangulation was employed, incorporating evidence from the literary work, psychological theories from specialists such as Jung and Freud, and the researcher's personal interpretation. The research indicates that Raskolnikov's attempts to demonstrate his superiority over moral law led him to a serene inner struggle, emotional instability, and contradictory attitudes. His guilt becomes a psychological force that motivates him to confess and reconstruct his identity. The findings also show that Dostoevsky uses the character's suffering to illustrate the common human struggle between pride and conscience. The study concludes that the meaning of life is lost when moral responsibility is denied. The book *Crime and Punishment* presents psychological transformation as a path toward recognition, truth, and redemption, however painful it may be. Through Raskolnikov, Dostoevsky demonstrates that individual responsibility is fundamental to emotional and mental well-being.

Resumen

Esta investigación analiza la evolución psicológica de Raskólnikov, el protagonista de Crimen y Castigo de Fiódor Dostoievski. La investigación explora la siguiente pregunta: ¿Cómo utiliza Dostoievski la búsqueda de significado de Raskólnikov para representar las luchas humanas entre lo correcto, lo incorrecto y la responsabilidad personal? El «participante» en este estudio es el propio Raskólnikov, cuyas acciones, pensamientos y sentimientos se analizan como datos psicológicos auténticos. Se empleó un análisis cualitativo basado en la triangulación, que incorpora evidencia de la obra literaria, teorías psicológicas de especialistas como Jung y Freud, y la interpretación personal del investigador. La investigación indica que los intentos de Raskólnikov por demostrar su superioridad sobre la ley moral lo conducen a una serena lucha interior, inestabilidad emocional y actitudes contradictorias. Su culpa se convierte en una fuerza psicológica que lo motiva a confesar y reconstruir su identidad. Los hallazgos también muestran que Dostoievski utiliza el sufrimiento del personaje para ilustrar la lucha humana común entre el orgullo y la conciencia. El estudio concluye que el sentido de la vida se pierde cuando se niega la responsabilidad moral. El libro Crimen y castigo presenta la transformación psicológica como un camino hacia el reconocimiento, la verdad y la redención, por doloroso que sea. A través de Raskólnikov, Dostoievski demuestra que la responsabilidad individual es fundamental para el bienestar emocional y mental.

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Chapter I

Introductory Framework

Introduction

The novel *Crime and Punishment*, written in 1866 by the Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky, is recognized as one of the most important in world literature. Set in St. Petersburg during a period marked by poverty, social inequality, and the philosophical tensions of the 19th century, this plot transcends the bounds of a simple detective novel. Through a deeply psychological and intense narrative, the writer examines humanity's most intricate ethical dilemmas: good and evil, guilt, punishment, redemption, and the internal battle between reason and conscience. The protagonist, Rodion Raskolnikov, is a young student who struggles between his intellectual ideals and his deepest feelings. His story makes us think about how far someone goes when they truly believe they are right.

Raskolnikov, burdened by poverty and his own intellectual vanity, decides to murder a moneylender, convinced that her death brings him more benefit than harm. He thinks some people are above normal moral rules, and that if he commits the crime without feeling guilty, it means he is one of those 'exceptional men. However, what happens after the crime proves otherwise: guilt begins to torment him, his mental health deteriorates, and his existence sinks into paranoia, isolation, and torment. As the plot progresses, Dostoevsky allows us to delve into the protagonist's thoughts and experience firsthand the emotional devastation caused by his actions.

Throughout the narrative, Raskolnikov interacts with characters who symbolize diverse moral and social attitudes, such as Sonia, a young woman who has chosen prostitution to save her family but maintains a firm belief in God and goodness. Sonia becomes a crucial figure in the protagonist's transformation, as she symbolizes the opportunity for forgiveness, unconditional

love, and redemption through pain. Porfiri, on the other hand, offers a more human and intuitive perspective on justice, and his presence constantly calls into question Raskolnikov's reliability. These and other characters enrich the work, highlighting diverse paths to suffering, poverty, and ethics.

Overall, *Crime and Punishment* is not only a thorough analysis of the human spirit but also a critique of philosophical concepts that attempt to legitimize immoral actions through logical reasoning. The work argues that punishment is not always established by law but can emanate from within, because of repentance and conscience. Dostoevsky uses crime as a source for a profound analysis of the meaning of pain, redemption, and the opportunity for transformation. In a dark and oppressive atmosphere, the writer makes us aware that even if an individual strays from ethics, there is always a path back to humanity. This complex and powerful novel remains relevant today for its ability to make us question our own ideas about justice, forgiveness, and the meaning of life.

1.1 Justification

In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov, the protagonist, is a young man who commits murder, believing it to be justified. From his perspective, certain people have the right to commit crimes if they gain a greater benefit. He is reminiscent of the old moneylender who murders a despicable person and believes that his elimination may benefit others, or even himself. However, what happens after the crime shows that not everything is as simple as he thought. He begins to feel increasingly ill, disoriented, and guilty. Even if he tells himself he had a good reason, his conscience does not let him feel at peace. This struggle between what he rationally believes and what he emotionally feels is what makes the character so interesting and motivated me to write this essay.

The main challenge that researchers intend to address is precisely this internal conflict: was Raskolnikov truly certain of the veracity of his theory, or did he use that concept as a pretext to legitimize desperate action? What is the true punishment he faces: prison or the mental torment he experiences from the moment he commits the crime? Through these questions, we can examine not only the character but also how Dostoevsky perceives punishment as something more intimate than a mere legal verdict. Guilt, fear, loneliness, and mental pain become Raskolnikov's true punishment, long before he admits to his crime.

This topic is relevant to me because, despite being a 19th-century literary work, many of the ideas it proposes are still relevant today. Today, there are also those who argue that the end justifies the means or believe they can break the rules if they have reasonable motives. Furthermore, we have all, at some point, committed actions that make us uncomfortable or that we try to justify by avoiding being guilty. Thus, Raskolnikov's story is not only that of a murderer, but also that of someone who symbolizes the most human side, with flaws, contradictions, and the aspiration to find a purpose in his existence.

Writing about this not only allows me to better understand the work and its characters, but also makes me reflect on themes such as morality, forgiveness, and the importance of pain. Dostoevsky does not offer a precise answer but instead leaves us with numerous questions about good and evil, and how we confront our own choices. This essay aims to explore how the writer uses crime to refer to internal punishment, and how the path to redemption can begin when one dares to confront one's own guilt.

1.2 Research Question

How does Dostoevsky use Raskolnikov's search for meaning to represent human struggles with right, wrong, and personal responsibility?

1.3 Objectives of the Investigation

- To examine how inner thoughts, emotional instability, and contradictory behaviors reflect a deep psychological conflict and contribute to his mental breakdown
- To identify the ethical dilemmas Raskolnikov experiences, especially the conflict between his belief in being above the law and the moral consequences of his actions
- To interpret how his growing guilt and desire for redemption lead to changes in his mindset, guiding him from denial to acceptance and, ultimately, to transformation

1.4 Antecedents

A study by Zúñiga and Chacón (2008) indicates that overcrowding and incarceration at the San José Institutional Attention Center cause psychological effects, such as loss of identity and high levels of anxiety and depression. Their study highlights that extreme social situations can affect people's mental health and emotional stability. This is relevant to this essay, as it demonstrates that distress and isolation can generate psychological suffering like that endured by Dostoevsky's characters. These findings allow us to understand that crime and punishment are not merely legal matters, but also deep psychological processes that impact a person's identity and psyche.

According to Aguilar (2015), who wrote an article on criminal responsibility and forensic psychology in Costa Rica, an individual's mental state is crucial in determining whether a crime can be legally prosecuted. The study indicates that to judge responsibility, it is necessary to

examine altered mental states, such as psychological disorders or emotional instability. This article is relevant to this essay because it is directly related to the psychological struggle of the protagonist, Raskolnikov, who continually questions his moral responsibility. Literature and forensic psychology agree that, to understand the mind of a criminal, the sense of guilt and conscience are fundamental.

According to Jiménez (2010), the psychological profile of serial killers in Costa Rica is examined, focusing on the first documented case of a psychopath in the country. The study demonstrates that internal motivation, personal conflicts, and identity struggles are crucial elements influencing criminal behavior. This thesis is relevant to this essay, as it relates to Dostoevsky's psychological approach, according to which criminality is not explained solely by external circumstances but also by deep internal conflicts. Jiménez's work, which examines real cases of psychological imbalance, lays the groundwork for understanding why characters like Raskolnikov behave the way they do, motivated by guilt, obsession, and personal crisis.

According to Vishruti (2024) portrays Raskolnikov is portrayed as a young man with emotional instability and schizotypal characteristics; anxious, domineering, and paranoid, which manifests his dual nature and tendency to distance himself from reality. According to this research, Raskolnikov not only experiences a sense of confusion due to his environment but also displays signs of voluntary isolation, which favors his emotional disconnection. This phrase is significant, as it directly supports the study of this essay, which argues that Raskolnikov's mental instability does not arise with the crime but rather manifests itself beforehand and worsens as his moral conflict intensifies. His brain has already been impacted from the beginning, which justifies his adherence to such radical concepts. Understanding this dual personality is essential to following his emotional transformation throughout the book.

According to a psychoanalytic interpretation, Wordspore (2017) details how Raskolnikov uses a defense mechanism known as "displacement," which consists of redirecting negative emotions toward a third party. In this scenario, his repressed frustration with his mother is unconsciously directed toward the loan shark. This phrase is relevant in this work, as it shows that the decision to murder does not derive solely from logical or moral reflection but is strongly linked to internal emotions and personal traumas. This reinforces the idea that crime has a psychological origin and that the character behaves from a place of internal pain rather than malice. Therefore, his guilt arises even before the crime, as his conscience recognizes that his impulse is more emotional than logical.

According to a study by the Gallerix website (2025), Raskolnikov suffers from a "moral crisis caused by poverty and intellectual pride," which leads him to distance himself from the world and take refuge in his own conceptions. The article notes that his voluntary isolation is a tactic to avoid confronting his moral concerns and external criteria. This observation is relevant to this work, as it reveals that his internal conflict arises not only from the notion of homicide, but from a way of life and thinking that distances him from human contact and reality. This makes it easier for us to understand why his moral and emotional change occurs in solitude, and why his thoughts become so radical. His isolation is not accidental; it is part of the process that leads to his psychological imbalance.

According to Marques (2020), Raskolnikov's psychological journey does not follow a simple or logical path but is filled with contradictions, whirlwinds, and moments of intense uncertainty. He calls it a "psychic odyssey," in which the character's mind does not advance in an organized fashion but is instead affected by internal conflicts and encounters with individuals who make him question his perception of the world. This phrase is extremely significant, as it

supports the essay's main concept: that Raskolnikov's transformation does not occur simply or instantaneously. His change is painful, messy, and filled with moments in which he seems to progress and regress simultaneously. This perspective allows us to understand why the character evolves so much throughout the novel and why guilt not only emerges at the end but accompanies him from the beginning as an unstable psychological process.

According to Frank (1995), he thoroughly examines Raskolnikov's psyche and argues that, after the crime, he is overwhelmed by unexpected guilt. Although he attempts to defend himself with his "extraordinary man" theory, he ultimately realizes that he did not murder for a just motive, but rather out of personal pride and desperation. According to Frank, the character's true tragedy lies in understanding that his thoughts were simply justifications to hide a self-centered desire. This phrase is crucial to this essay, as it corroborates that the main conflict is not limited to whether the crime was right or wrong, but rather that the character must confront his true impulse, which he himself refused to acknowledge. This discrepancy between his beliefs and his true emotions lies at the core of his moral and psychological struggle and is precisely what this essay seeks to explore.

1.5 Scope

This study focuses on the moral and psychological development of the protagonist, Raskolnikov, in Fyodor Dostoevsky's literary work, *Crime and Punishment*. The main objective is to understand how his internal conflicts, emotional instability, and moral dilemmas affect his way of reasoning, behaving, and interpreting reality throughout the story. By studying his reactions, decisions, and personal reflections, we seek to understand how Dostoevsky uses the character to represent the struggle between reason and conscience. The study focuses only on Raskolnikov, leaving other storylines or characters unless they directly affect his thoughts or

moral growth. It is crucial to follow his internal conflict from the moment he commits the crime until he begins to admit his guilt and seek redemption.

The goal of this work is to explore the literary and psychological sides of the character, without going into the historical, religious, or political context of 19th-century Russia. While these components can enrich the overall reading of the work, in this case, they are not the focus of the analysis. Also, even though some secondary characters like Sonia, Razumikhin, or Inspector Porfiry help show Raskolnikov's state of mind, they are not analyzed in Depth. They are only mentioned when their connection to Raskolnikov clearly adds to his inner conflict. This restriction facilitates a clear and structured approach, allowing for a more thorough analysis of the main character's emotional evolution and the elements that drive his psychological change.

Adopting this closer perspective facilitates a more detailed and nuanced examination of how Dostoevsky reveals the essence of humanity through Raskolnikov's pain and contradictions. The essay analyzes how his belief that he had the right to break a moral rule starts to fade as guilt takes over, showing that the real punishment is mental and emotional, not just legal. The key moments of this change are examined, from denial and justification to guilt and acceptance. This perspective attempts to reveal not only his thoughts and behaviors, but also his emotional decline as he attempts to maintain a belief that contradicts him as a character. By maintaining these boundaries clearly established, the aim is to obtain a coherent and detailed interpretation of the character's moral conflict, without deviating from the main objective: understanding how an ordinary person can confront their own conscience and immerse themselves in it.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Fyodor Dostoevsky, a 19th-century Russian writer, is distinguished for his work centering on characters immersed in intense internal struggles. In the film *Crime and Punishment*, we meet Raskolnikov, a young student who begins to contemplate committing a crime. He does so not out of hatred or the pleasure of causing harm, but because he believes it could be justified if it fulfills an essential objective. This idea does not present itself immediately; it develops gradually in his mind, like a seed that he sows with arguments, needs, and frustrations. From the beginning, it is evident that his emotional state is unstable. He has dark thoughts, distances himself from people, and is unable to focus on anything specific. He lives in a constant state of confusion, where everything disturbs him, nothing motivates him, and his mind seems trapped in a whirlwind of thoughts that prevent him from living in peace.

In chapter II, Raskolnikov's mental dysfunction begins to become palpable. Although he tries to convince himself that he has a purpose, the truth is that his thoughts are full of contradictions. One day, he believes crime is essential, and the next, he feels vulnerable just thinking about it. Sometimes, he perceives himself as superior, as if he belongs to a group of individuals capable of making complex decisions for the benefit of humanity. Other times, however, he feels guilty, scared, and bewildered. This movement of thought signals the beginning of his true internal conflict. He is no longer limited to surviving in an unequal world or supporting his family. Now is the time to confront his own conscience, his ethical limitations, and that inner voice that tells him that not everything he thinks is appropriate.

Furthermore, in this segment of the literary work, the first signs of guilt emerge, even before Raskolnikov acts. He begins to feel restlessness, discomfort, and anguish, as if his body were responding to an impending punishment. His feelings change rapidly, and his behavior becomes unusual. He isolates himself, does not eat, has disturbing dreams, and struggles to express his thoughts clearly. All this demonstrates that his dilemma is not only ethical but also emotional and psychological. The idea of committing a crime begins to impact him so much that he seems to lose control. The most fascinating thing is that he seeks to validate his emotions, generating concepts and theories that give meaning to his possible actions. However, his conscience does not abandon him. This early guilt clearly shows that his inner conflict has already started and keeps getting stronger.

This chapter is key to understanding the whole story because it shows the conflict that defines the character. Not only is the idea of committing murder relevant, but also everything that happens within him as he reflects on it. Through his reflections, feelings, and behavioral transformations, we see how the writer leads us to deeper themes: guilt, ethics, justice, and the purpose of life. Dostoevsky not only recounts Raskolnikov's actions but also his emotions, thoughts, and the internal conflicts that plague him. Therefore, this chapter is not a simple introduction to the crime, but a direct look into the spirit of a character who doubts whether he is acting correctly or whether he has already disappeared forever.

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the beginning of the hidden war Raskolnikov wages within himself. It is a struggle between what he desires to achieve and what he knows is wrong, between his desire to become someone important and his fear of abandoning his human nature. Throughout this chapter, we observe how crime ceases to be a concept and becomes an essential component of his identity, and how this radically transforms him. We also observe how

other people, external circumstances, and even their dreams affect their way of thinking, causing the distinction between good and evil to become increasingly blurred. It is at this point that the character ceases to be a young student and transforms into a person caught between pride, guilt, and the search for a purpose in life.

Literature

Literature is an art form that uses language to communicate experiences, feelings, and ideas creatively. Unlike conventional communication, literature seeks to go beyond basic information; it explores the complexity of human beings and reflects social, cultural, and historical realities. Writers can capture not only external events but also people's inner worlds through stories, plays, poetry, or novels. This literature is both universal and individual, as it addresses essential human themes and allows each reader to find their own interpretation.

Literature, due to its richness and multifaceted nature, has been analyzed from several perspectives that contribute to understanding its meaning. A common perspective is historical literature, which analyzes a text based on the time and place of its writing, establishing connections to political and social events. Biographical literature is another type of literature that examines how the author's personal life and experiences influence their work. In contrast, formal literature focuses on the style, language, and structure of the text, ignoring external elements. Each of these approaches emphasizes several literary elements, demonstrating that the same work can legitimately be interpreted in a variety of ways.

Within these positions, the psychological approach is distinguished by its emphasis on the inner lives of characters and the mental processes that appear in the text. This method applies psychological theories to literature and examines the emotions, motivations, and conflicts that

shape human behavior. It can also analyze how readers react emotionally to a story or how the author's unconsciousness affects their writing. In this way, it turns literature into a reflection of the human psyche, allowing for a deeper understanding of both fictional characters and the psychological dynamics of real life. For this reason, it is possible to understand why psychology and literature are often intertwined: they provide insights into the human condition that transcend conventional analysis.

Literature is also significant because it establishes a link between personal experience and collective memory. It becomes a record of how humanity has changed in terms of thought and emotion, preserving the values, fears, and hopes of previous generations through symbols and stories. At the same time, literature promotes empathy because, by immersing themselves in the world of its characters, readers can understand points of view different from their own. This ability to unite cultures and minds across time and space demonstrates that the exploration of literature is not limited solely to aesthetics but also to the understanding of humanity. In this sense, the various analytical perspectives do not compete; on the contrary, they complement each other and provide different tools for understanding the richness of literary works.

2.1 The Psychological Approach

2.1.1 Definition

The method of literary analysis, known as the psychological approach, focuses on human thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Rather than focusing solely on the story or its historical context, this approach seeks to understand how characters think, feel, and make decisions, and how their unconscious desires or fears affect their actions. It is based on psychological principles, especially those that explain how people deal with guilt, motivations, aspirations, and

internal conflicts. In this sense, the psychological perspective allows the reader to perceive a literary work not only as an external narrative but also as a reflection of the complex inner world of human beings. It helps to find hidden meanings in the characters' actions and to link literature to universal emotional and mental processes.

This approach also tends to explore the concept that every human action has a psychological motive, whether conscious or unconscious. From this perspective, characters are viewed as multidimensional beings whose emotions and thoughts represent people's true psychological problems. The psychological approach also analyzes how trauma, moral dilemmas, and repression shape identity. To this end, he frequently draws on theories formulated by figures such as Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud to interpret literary behavior. Critics can discover deeper truths about human nature and the difficulties that motivate people to behave irrationally or self-destructively by analyzing characters' dreams, symbols, and mental states.

Ultimately, the psychological perspective turns literature into a mirror of the mind. It not only helps readers put themselves in the characters' shoes and empathize with their pain or contradictions but also encourages them to reflect on their own fears, emotions, and moral decisions. Thus, literature becomes a medium of psychological inquiry that reveals how fragile and profound the human condition can be.

2.1.2 Relation between Psychological Approach and Literature

The relation between literature and psychology lies in their joint study of human emotions and the mind. While psychology provides a framework for understanding these mental processes, literature generally demonstrates the complexity of thoughts, emotions, and motivations that characterize human beings. Both disciplines attempt to shed light on why

individuals feel, think, and act the way they do. By examining a literary work from a psychological perspective, readers go beyond the superficial story and delve into the emotional and mental universe of the characters. Every uncertainty, fear, or ethical dilemma becomes an opportunity to understand authentic psychological experiences, turning literature into a valuable reflection of the human condition.

Through this approach, literature becomes more than just a method of artistic expression: it becomes a space where internal struggles are analyzed and understood. Characters often represent feelings such as guilt, anxiety, or obsession, which are representations of universal facets of the human condition. The psychological approach allows readers to identify that behind every action or decision lies an internal process guided by emotional needs or unconscious motives. The connection between text and the mind allows literature to act as a reflection and analysis of the self. It motivates the reader's introspective reflection, establishing a link between the experiences of fictional characters and their own emotions and conflicts.

At the same time, the psychological approach emphasizes that a literary text is affected by the writer's mental world. Authors frequently express their fears, dreams, and unresolved feelings in their works, sometimes without being aware of it. Thus, literature becomes an indirect manifestation of the writer's unconscious. Readers can discover hidden meanings that reveal both the psychology of the characters and the author's creative mind by examining symbols, dreams, and irrational behaviors in a narrative. This transforms the psychological perspective into a powerful tool for understanding how emotion and imagination interrelate during the creative process.

In short, the connection between literature and psychology highlights the profound bond between art and the analysis of the human mind. The invisible processes of desire, thought, and

emotion that determine our lives are expressed in literature, which is what psychology seeks to explain. The psychological perspective merges with these two realms by turning reading into an activity of self-discovery, in which both reader and writer engage in a joint exploration of the mind. It demonstrates that stories are not mere products of the imagination but also reflections of authentic psychological truths, showing that every narrative is, in essence, a journey into human consciousness.

2.1.3 Main Exponents

The psychological approach to literature is largely based on Sigmund Freud, whose postulates completely revolutionized our understanding of human behavior and creativity. Freud proposed that what people think or do is largely influenced by the unconscious, an internal space where repressed memories, fears, and desires are hidden. This idea allowed literary critics to analyze characters not only through their visible actions but also through their hidden motivations. Concepts such as the superego, the ego, and the id became fundamental instruments for expressing internal conflicts in fiction. For example, a character who finds himself in conflict between his moral duty and his instinctual desire can be interpreted as a reflection of the battle between these psychological forces.

Freud also believed that literature functions analogously to dreams; both operate through metaphors and symbols, expressing what is repressed in the unconscious. This perspective revolutionized literary analysis, encouraging readers to search for hidden meanings in works rather than simply accepting what they read without question. A recurring object, image, or event might symbolize a character's secret longings or fears, for example. From this perspective, writers began to be perceived not only as storytellers but also as people creatively exposing their

inner world. Literature took on new depth thanks to Freud's influence, becoming a medium for exploring psychology, where repression and imagination intertwine.

Carl Jung, who introduced new ideas and expanded on Freud's, was another important contributor to the psychological approach. Jung suggested that individuals share a "collective unconscious," a section of the psyche that includes universal patterns known as archetypes. These archetypes, the wise old man, the shadow, or the hero, are repeated in the literature, tales, and myths of all civilizations. Jung's theories facilitated the understanding that literature unites human beings through shared symbols and feelings. His ideas motivated critics to consider stories not only as individual products, but also as representations of the common human experience.

Later, Jacques Lacan provided a more contemporary linguistic approach to the psychological perspective. He argued that language is a means of shaping identity and desire, meaning that the way characters express themselves or speak reveals who they are and what they seek. Lacan's work emphasized how fantasy, the unconscious, and communication contribute to the construction of human identity, which complicates literary analysis. Freud, Jung, and Lacan laid solid groundwork for analyzing literature from a psychological perspective. Their theories confirmed that stories are more than a means of entertainment: they are windows into the human mind, revealing our most intimate longings, dreams, and fears through the art of language and imagination.

2.2 Raskolnikov's Psychological State

From the beginning of the work, Raskolnikov is presented as a bewildered, mentally unstable, and emotionally exhausted character. He spends his time alone in his room,

uninterested in conversing with anyone, seeking no company, and increasingly immersed in his own thoughts. He lives in deplorable conditions, neglecting his diet and sleep, which deteriorates his mental state. From the first pages, it is evident that his perception of the world is transforming, as if he were in a kind of fog where everything disturbed him or left him indifferent. His thoughts were neither precise nor clear. At times, he seemed steadfast, and at other times, he withdrew, questioning himself. This continued instability is evidence that something within him has already fractured. Even before he makes a crucial decision, we can already sense a conflict developing in his mind, a conflict that affects him both physically and emotionally.

Little by little, this struggle becomes clearer as the notion of crime begins to dawn on him. At first, he did not even consider it negative. He does not see it as a brutal or self-centered act, but rather as something that could have a greater meaning. In his view, eradicating someone like the old moneylender could mean freeing others from his domination and, in turn, improving his own condition. This kind of thinking leads him to convince himself that there are individuals who rise above the norm. He believes that if history has forgiven or even celebrated those who perpetrated atrocious acts for a greater cause, he also has the capacity to do so. This thought reassures him momentarily, but it is a way of protecting himself from the weight of guilt.

The fascinating thing is that this logic does not entirely convince him of the importance. Although he constantly tries to defend his thoughts, there is a part of him that remains uneasy. His logical side tells him he has the right, that the action may make sense. However, his emotional side, that inner voice he cannot silence, tells him that all is not well. Every day, this conflict between logic and morality intensifies. It is as if one half of him is determined to progress, while the other is mired in uncertainty, fear, and insecurity. At times, he even mocks

himself, becomes irritated by thinking so much, and feels disoriented, as if he does not know his identity or his aspirations.

Furthermore, the solitude in which he resides only intensifies this confusion. He has no one to talk to openly; he does not share his thoughts with anyone, and by isolating himself so much, his ideas become radicalized. What could have been a mere fleeting reflection transforms into an obsession. His mind begins to reconsider the matter, exploring motives, examples, and justifications, until he realizes that his thoughts are not only valid but indispensable. However, his body begins to show signs of fatigue: he experiences a feeling of tiredness, his appetite decreases, he develops a fever, and he faints. These physical signs are clear evidence that his mental health is in complete decline.

In this initial phase, we observe how Raskolnikov begins to evolve internally. He is no longer a teenager with financial difficulties or personal disappointments; now he is a person beginning to disconnect from reality and develop his own system of thought to survive his guilt. This process is slow but extremely powerful, as it lays the foundation for the profound moral conflict that absorbs him throughout the novel. Through his mood swings, his confused reflections, and his internal defense of the crime, the reader can perceive that the true punishment comes not after the murder, but before, when his conscience and reason can no longer coexist.

One of the most obvious signs of his mental condition is his loneliness. He stops talking to his friends, ignores his mother and sister, and appears completely distant. This attitude demonstrates that his social and emotional life is spiraling out of control. He also suffers from constant anxiety, sweating, tremors, and sudden mood swings. He is unable to maintain composure or reason clearly. This instability indicates that his mental condition is progressively deteriorating, and his internal conflict intensifies.

From the beginning, Raskolnikov shows clear signs of mental exhaustion. He isolates himself in solitary confinement for days, does not eat, and experiences severe mood swings. According to Frank (1995), "Raskolnikov's bewildering, feverish state is not merely physical, but a palpable manifestation of his unresolved moral conflict" (p. 101). This idea reinforces the way Dostoevsky transforms the character's body into a reflection of his internal conflict. This is not simply a complex decision; his mind oscillates between the rational and the emotional, and this already begins to significantly influence his everyday behavior. The reference by Joseph Frank, one of Dostoevsky's most prominent biographers, strongly reinforces the connection between Raskolnikov's mind and body, which is crucial at this point.

Furthermore, it can be observed that his psychological condition leads him to extreme reflections. One moment, he perceives himself as superior to others, as if he has a specific goal; the next, he perceives himself as miserable and useless. This contradiction shows that he is confronting himself. He wants to convince himself that he has a solid motive for committing the crime, but at the same time, something internal is holding him back. This mental battle takes him to a point where he can no longer reason calmly, and it is at that moment that he begins to lose control of the truth.

2.2.1 The Birth of the Moral Dilemma

At this point in the plot, Raskolnikov begins to seriously consider murdering his former victim. It is not an impulsive plan; on the contrary, the idea starts small and gradually expands within him like an indelible shadow. What begins as an uncertain, even disturbing option becomes more pressing every day. He tries to understand her, recognizing that this woman harms the most disadvantaged, takes advantage of people's desperation, and exploits the poverty of

others. From this perspective, he begins to support the idea, considering that perhaps suppressing her would benefit the world. It is not yet a plan, but the intention is there, and that transforms everything. He no longer thinks like an ordinary man; he begins to see himself as someone with a "mission."

Little by little, his thoughts begin to evolve from "this is a crime" to "perhaps it is essential." It is at this moment that his moral conflict truly begins. What complicates matters is that Raskolnikov no longer sees the act as something entirely negative. He considers that if his actions can benefit others, such as his family or those who suffer from the same poverty he sees daily, perhaps they are not entirely harmful. He begins to fantasize that some individuals in history had to make difficult decisions for a greater cause. He compares himself to figures like Napoleon, who, he believes, committed atrocious acts but ended up being admired despite everything. This comparison makes him feel different, almost superior, as if he belonged to the category of individuals capable of breaking the rules because their goal surpasses the law.

This notion begins to change his view of himself. He wants to affirm that he is strong enough to overcome traditional morality, that he can give up something small for something great. However, deep down, he feels that something is not right. His conscience is not clear. Even when he tries to hide it with reasoning and arguments, there is an inner voice that worries him. He feels fear, discomfort, and an unusual anxiety that he cannot control. It is as if his mind and heart are pulling in opposite directions. He considers one idea, but experiences another. And this constant tension begins to influence the way he communicates, walks, and interacts with others. It completely transforms his mood.

This ethical conflict transcends the mere decision of whether to kill. It becomes a question of who he really is and what kind of person he aspires to be. Raskolnikov does not just aspire to

money or a more dignified life; he pursues a goal. He longs to feel that his life has meaning, that he is not just another man hiding in a world filled with pain. Yet, at the same time, he still harbors guilt, uncertainty, and fear within. He tries to silence these emotions, to ignore them, but they do not go away. He begins to persuade us that his actions seek the common good, but even in his arguments, we can sense that he insists too much on relying on his own reason. This conflict is what terrifies him.

What makes this internal battle so intense is his humanity. Many people, in times of pressure or crisis, seek to justify their actions, arguing that the ends justify the means. Raskolnikov is no exception. He is exhausted from experiencing feelings of worthlessness and invisibility. He aspires to prove to himself and to the world that he is in control, that he is not fragile. However, the reality is that as he reflects more deeply on the crime, he also becomes more disturbed. His thoughts darken, his body wears down, and his fear becomes harder to hide. His struggle is not only intellectual, but also emotional and spiritual. He is not just deciding what to do; he is deciding his identity.

This is the emergence of his ethical dilemma, and it is the beginning of the real plot. It is no longer just about poverty, injustice, or personal suffering; it is about what happens when an individual loses harmony between their heart and mind. Raskolnikov does not yet understand this, but his conflict already torments him. He yearns to overcome conventional morality, but deep down, he is still human. And this contradiction sharpens, leading him to collapse even before he acts. From that moment on, everything he does is marked by this internal war.

2.2.2 Signs of Internal Struggle

From the moment Raskolnikov begins to take the murder seriously, his behavior changes noticeably. It is not just dark thoughts, but a complete change in his behavior, communication, and even his way of walking. He locks himself in his room for days, without drinking water, eating properly, or interacting with anyone. He wanders around the city, as if disoriented, with no clear destination. He sometimes interacts with himself or displays unusual reactions in public, as if he cannot control his emotions or thoughts. There are even times when he seems unaware of where he is or what day it is, demonstrating that his mind is completely disoriented. All of this shows us that, although he has not committed a crime yet, he is already suffering the consequences of his internal struggle.

The most astonishing thing is how his thoughts constantly change. One day, he feels confident in his actions and believes his decision makes sense, that he is acting correctly. He believes that if he succeeds in eliminating the old loan shark, his life will get better, and he can help others. However, the next day, everything changed. He feels insecure, full of uncertainties, and wonders if he has permission to carry out such a serious act. This mental instability continually impacts him. He oscillates between certainty and fear, between serenity and anguish. He is unable to maintain his composure because two forces clash within him: one that wants to continue with the plan and another that stops him and reminds him that what he is planning to do is wrong.

Guilt begins to surface before he commits the crime, and this is what most accentuates his inner pain. Raskolnikov suffers disturbing dreams and nightmares in which he witnesses violence and death, causing him to wake up agitated, frightened, and with an intense feeling of anxiety. In one of his deepest dreams, he witnesses the death of a horse right in front of him, and

despite it being only a dream, he experiences it as if it were real. These kinds of scenes are not simple snapshots, but clear indications of his mental state. Through these dreams, his conscience communicates something to him, showing him that what he wants to do is wrong, even though he cruelly tries to defend it. Guilt takes over his mind, spiraling out of control.

One of the most emblematic moments is when he dreams about the murder of a horse, a situation that deeply impacts him. This dream is not accidental; in fact, it is a symbol of his ethical sensitivity, which attempts to survive in the face of his rational desire for authority. According to Miller (2005), "Dostoevsky's dreams act as fissures that allow the infiltration of the character's authentic moral essence" (p. 78). These dreamlike visions reveal Raskolnikov's conscience, even when he tries to silence it. This quote details the symbolic role of dreams in Dostoevsky, which means that an essential tool the writer uses to reveal internal conflicts in his psyche.

This internal battle also manifests itself in his way of interacting with others. Before, despite his reserve, he could at least maintain a daily conversation with his friend Razumihin or his mother. However, today, whenever he converses with someone, he seems distant, abrupt, or nervous. He writes meaningless sentences, gets angry easily, or remains silent for no reason. He always seems to be in another world, pondering other matters. When he is in public spaces, he feels uncomfortable, as if everyone is watching or evaluating him, although no one knows what is going on in his mind. This shows that his conflict is no longer merely internal but impacts his entire existence and his way of being in the world.

Finally, we see that Raskolnikov is unable to escape this internal war that is gradually devastating him. Although he tries to convince himself that his plan is essential and that he possesses enough strength to carry it out, neither his body nor his mind convinces him. He

exhibits physical symptoms such as fever, extreme fatigue, and even loss of consciousness, and his mental instability intensifies. His thoughts become darker and more disturbing, and his emotions constantly spiral out of control. Guilt, fear, confusion, and despair swirl inside him, preventing him from reasoning clearly. These signs of internal conflict demonstrate that, although he has not yet committed the crime, he has already begun to lose control of himself, as if his punishment had already begun.

2.2.3 External Influences

Although Raskolnikov's main conflict lies within his mind, it is also vital to observe how his environment affects his thoughts and emotions. He is not isolated from the world, and various circumstances around him bring him ever closer to the concept of crime. His place of residence, St. Petersburg, is filled with poverty, filth, and inequality, and he constantly observes it. His room is gloomy, small, and in excellent condition, which is evidence of his emotional and mental health. Raskolnikov lacks financial resources, cannot cover his university expenses, consumes alcohol, and has virtually no one to talk to. This harsh and miserable existence makes him feel useless, confined, and hopeless. All of this creates an environment that gradually pushes him to believe that his only solution is to do something extreme to change his situation.

One of the most relevant scenes that impacts him is when he unexpectedly overhears a conversation in a tavern between a student and an officer. They converse very coldly about whether it is appropriate to murder someone if it benefits others. They refer to the former activist as a role model, claiming that her death would not represent a loss to the world. Although Raskolnikov does not participate in the conversation, he listens with great concentration. It is as if these words corroborate his previous thoughts, as if they were a signal telling him: "You are

not alone in this idea." This conversation does not motivate him to act, but it does have a great impact, as it gives him a kind of "moral permission" to continue with his project. From that moment on, his thinking becomes clearer, and his decision begins to seem more justified.

This dialogue in the tavern, where the men debate whether murdering the pawnbroker would be equitable, constitutes a pivotal moment. Raskolnikov watches intently, but the words seem to corroborate his darkest thoughts. According to Jones (2014), "That scene not only corroborates the notion of homicide; it gives Raskolnikov the false perception that logic and morality can be separated" (p. 132). This external factor functions as a stimulus that persuades him to believe his plan is logical, when it only further entangles him in his disorientation. This quote offers a study of how the social and verbal environment can either strengthen or alter an idea, helping us understand Raskolnikov's psychological milieu.

Another element that significantly impacts him is the emotional separation he maintains with those who love him the most. Despite having faithful friends like Razumihin, his mother, and his sister, who truly love him, Raskolnikov chooses to distance himself from everyone. When they speak to him, he does not respond, is cold, rude, or simply leaves for days without saying anything. He feels that no one can understand what is happening, and this leads him to withdraw increasingly deeply into his thoughts. The lack of support is not due to others' reluctance to help him, but to the fact that he himself prevents anyone from helping him. This isolation is extremely damaging, as it leaves him alone with his thoughts, with no one to offer him perspective or remind him that all is not lost. This loneliness fuels his uncertainty, his anxiety, and his desire to prove that he can take control of his existence.

Furthermore, his lifestyle increasingly resembles that of a person who is a person. He has no job or studies and spends his days wandering around the city. He walks for hours, often with no

idea where he is going, simply because he cannot bear being confined. This lifestyle turns him into a specter in society, like someone who no longer has a place or role. Raskolnikov does not perceive himself as useful, appreciated, or important. This perception of emptiness and powerlessness leads him to believe that only a majestic, powerful, and shocking act can give meaning to his life. It is as if crime is the only way to prove that he still possesses power, courage, and mastery over something.

All these external influences do not justify his intentions, but they do allow us to understand how he got into this situation. The crime arose not only in his mind but also from the suffering, frustration, and tension surrounding him. Every experience, every person, every conversation, and every difficult moment is a component of a mystery that pushes him to the limit. What happens on the outside merges with what he already possesses within: fear, anger, pride, and the aspiration to transform his life. Therefore, external factors become a reflection of his inner world, and together, these two forces progressively guide him toward a decision of no return.

2.2.4 Moral Justification vs Guilt

Before the crime, Raskolnikov begins to formulate a personal theory that allows him to convince himself that he has valid reasons for committing it. He does not see himself as a habitual murderer, but as someone about to carry out an essential act, as if he were part of a larger plan. In his mind, he is not an evil individual, but a person with a unique mission. He begins to compare himself to historical figures, such as Napoleon, who, according to him, also broke the rules, committed violent acts, and is still remembered as an important figure. He believes that these people transformed the world because they dared to do what others could not. Thus, he begins to think that murdering the old pawnbroker would not be a selfish crime, but a

beneficial action, as it would expel someone who harms others and, at the same time, could improve his own situation. This justification gives him a feeling of less guilt and greater self-confidence, although this confidence is not genuine, but simply a means to ease his conscience.

Although he constantly repeats this idea to himself, something inside him does not feel entirely at ease. Every time he tries to convince himself that the crime is excusable, an inner voice arises, telling him he is wrong. That voice may not always be loud, but it never goes away. Even before he acts, he begins to experience feelings of guilt. He wakes up sweating, is nauseous, loses the ability to control his body, and is unable to concentrate. He develops a fever, faints, and wanders disoriented through the streets, as if his body also responds to the weight of his thoughts.

Despite his efforts to remain steadfast in his decision, his body begins to weaken, evidence of the internal conflict he experiences. According to Frank (1995), "Raskolnikov's fever is a physical reflection of his fragmented consciousness and the conflict between his theory and his humanity" (p. 101). This sentence is vital because it shows that Raskolnikov's difficulty is not simply a thought in his mind, but a battle so fierce that even his body begins to suffer. This shows that, despite trying to justify himself and convince himself that he is acting correctly, he knows that what he is about to do is wrong. Guilt already punishes him even before he commits the crime, allowing us to understand that the punishment begins with him.

This prior guilt shows that Raskolnikov is not a cold or completely logical person. Although no one has identified him and he has not yet acted, he begins to behave as if he is already responsible. He believes everyone sees him, criticizes him, and begins to perceive doubts in the eyes of others, although all this resides only in his mind. His way of expressing himself changes; he becomes easily irritated, is unable to maintain a calm dialogue, and always seems nervous or

distracted. Those around him perceive him as peculiar, yet he is unable to reveal the truth. His behavior becomes more impulsive, which isolates him from others. He no longer feels an emotional connection with anyone, not even his mother or his friend Razumikhin. Guilt isolates him and confines him in a mental universe where everything becomes more confusing, where rest and tranquility no longer exist. The confinement process begins in his mind, long before it begins in any cell.

There are times when Raskolnikov experiences a sense of power. He believes he does not need to abide by other people's rules, that he is unique and inimitable. He convinces himself that he belongs to a small group of people with a broader perspective on life. This gives him the right to do whatever is necessary to achieve his goals. He perceives himself as superior, as if he has a deeper motivation to move forward. However, this certainly does not last long. Finally, after a while, he breaks down emotionally. He begins to tremble, becomes filled with uncertainty, and experiences fear like any ordinary person. This combination of ideas confuses him even more. On the one hand, he tries to convince himself that everything is under control, but on the other, his fear proves that his theory is not as solid as he thought. It is simply a way of protecting himself from the truth: that he is about to commit something atrocious and that, in essence, he is perfectly aware of it.

This battle between legitimizing crime and experiencing feelings of guilt is what makes Raskolnikov such a fascinating and human character. He is neither completely positive nor negative. He is between two versions of himself: one that believes crime makes sense and another that is terrified by the thought of it. This struggle impacts the way he thinks, communicates, behaves, and even his well-being. This conflict resonates in his body and mind. In this chapter, it becomes clear that crime does not begin with murder, but long before, in his

reflection. And the guilt does not arise afterward; it haunts him from the beginning. That guilt acts like a shadow that haunts him throughout the story, reminding him of that, despite his reasonableness.

2.3 Themes, Motifs, and Symbols

2.3.1 Themes

Literary themes are the fundamental messages or concepts that a work conveys to the reader. It's not about the story itself, but rather what it implies or suggests about life, human experience, or society. A theme can address universal themes such as freedom, justice, love, ambition, or guilt, and is often expressed through the actions, conflicts, and development of characters. A theme, unlike a plot, tells us its importance and the profound truth it represents. In this sense, themes give literature its timeless value because they connect specific events in a story with issues relevant to all human beings.

At the same time, themes are not always presented directly or overtly. Writers often use characters, dialogue, or events to suggest concepts that the reader must decipher. A theme, for example, may be hidden behind symbols, recurring situations, or contradictions between characters. Readers play an active role in identifying and interpreting these themes, as each person may find a slightly different meaning depending on their perspective and context. This allows themes to be powerful and flexible, allowing literature to express itself across diverse cultures and historical periods, constantly providing new perspectives on human nature.

2.3.2 Motifs

Literary motifs are recurring elements, such as patterns, situations, or images, throughout a work and contribute to strengthening its underlying themes. Motifs, unlike themes that convey

general ideas, are specific, recurring elements that evoke those ideas in the reader. For example, a frequent depiction of darkness can be used to emphasize a theme of fear or uncertainty. Motifs function as threads that connect different parts of the story, providing depth and unity to the narrative. They are not random; authors carefully select them to guide their readers toward interpreting broader meanings.

Another important element of motifs is that they can manifest in a variety of ways, not only as visual images but also as repeated words, actions, or situations. A motif can be a symbolic place, a specific type of conversation, or a particular object that recurs throughout the story. By repeating themselves, motifs capture the reader's attention and create a sense of rhythm and coherence in the work. They also allow readers to recognize concepts that might not initially be obvious. Thus, motifs function as links between the visible part of the story and the deeper issues that give meaning to its meaning, making literature richer and more memorable.

2.3.3 Symbols

Symbols in literature are elements, objects, or characters that symbolize concepts beyond their literal meaning. They act as signs with deeper meaning, allowing creators to express abstract ideas through concrete forms. For example, love can be symbolized by a rose, while a storm can symbolize conflict or transformation. Symbols enrich a text by creating layers of meaning and encouraging the reader to go beyond the surface and discover hidden messages. Symbols, unlike motifs (which are repetitive patterns) or themes (which are general ideas), are concrete representations that give visible form to the abstract ideas present in the story.

The use of symbols is also important in establishing a connection between readers and universal concepts. They can convey complex meanings in a simple way, perceived in diverse

contexts, tapping into emotional or cultural connections. Writers often use symbols deliberately, but sometimes readers can also attribute symbolic value to aspects that might not seem relevant at first glance. This interaction between author and reader allows symbols to be interpreted in different ways. Thus, symbols transform the details of everyday life into meaningful signs, helping literature convey concepts about human experience more vividly and memorably.

2.4 Author's Biography

Fyodor Dostoevsky, born in Moscow in 1821, is considered one of the most important Russian novelists of the 19th century. Adversity, illness, and constant struggle shaped his life and significantly influenced his writing. As a young man, he received training in engineering, but soon afterward turned to literature; his first novel, "Poor Folk", was published in 1846. Just a few years later, he was arrested for collaborating with a group of intellectuals accused of opposing the government. He faced the death penalty, but it was commuted at the last minute. This profound experience, accompanied by years of exile in Siberia, shaped his perspective on human suffering, morality, and redemption; themes that would later become central themes in his novels. His personal struggle with epilepsy, gambling, and poverty also gave him a profound understanding of despair and psychological conflict, which became the basis of his literary work.

Throughout his career, Dostoevsky wrote novels that delved into the depths of human nature, frequently focusing on crime, guilt, and the search for meaning. He established himself as a master of psychological narrative with works such as *Demons* (1872), *Notes from Underground* (1864), *The Idiot* (1869), and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). His writing integrated social criticism, psychology, and philosophy, allowing him to explore beyond simple narrative and the nature of the human soul. Dostoevsky died in 1881, but his legacy continues to

influence literature, philosophy, and psychology worldwide. He is not only a novelist but also a thinker whose work still resonates with contemporary readers thanks to his ability to portray the complexities of the mind and the moral struggles people face.

Dostoevsky's life was a constant battle between darkness and light, which explains why his writings frequently explore extreme moral and psychological circumstances. His time in prison and exile brought him into contact with people from diverse backgrounds, including peasants and criminals, giving him direct insight into the human condition in its most raw and desperate manifestations. These experiences convinced him that suffering was an inevitable part of life, but also a possible path to spiritual development. His firm religious faith, which intensified over the years, influenced his conviction that redemption was only possible through acceptance of suffering, compassion, and humility. His novels were deeply influenced by this personal philosophy, in which characters often experience torment but can find renewal and meaning.

Dostoevsky was involved not only in his philosophical and religious concerns but also in the social and political tensions of his time. He lived in a time of significant change in Russia, characterized by debates about justice, the role of the individual in society, and modernity. Through his novels, he warned of the risks of dehumanization and criticized materialism, radical ideologies, and the denial of moral responsibility. His work foreshadowed many ideas that would later become fundamental to existentialist psychology and philosophy, giving him a role as a bridge between literature and intellectual thought. For this reason, Dostoevsky is remembered not only as a magnificent storyteller but also as a thinker whose unique voice, forged in his personal reflections and conflicts, still addresses universal human concerns today.

2.5 Plot of the Book

Crime and Punishment is set in St. Petersburg, a city characterized by economic misery, social conflict, and the loss of ethical values. This reflects the mental state of its protagonist, Rodion Raskolnikov. He is a young law student living on the brink of extreme poverty, estranged from his friends and family, and burdened by conflicting ideas about justice and morality. Raskolnikov, influenced by his intellectual theories, concludes that some exceptional people are justified in breaking moral laws if they achieve a higher goal. This conviction leads him to murder Alyona Ivanovna, a loan shark whom he considers a social parasite. However, his attempt to justify the action as rational quickly falls apart when, overcome by fear, he murders his innocent sister, Lizaveta. This leaves him deeply affected.

Raskolnikov experiences an intense psychological conflict because of the crime. Instead of finding confirmation of his superiority or relief, he is tormented by guilt, fear, and alienation. His health deteriorates as he oscillates between paranoia and delirium, unable to harmonize his actions with his conscience. His relationships reflect this internal struggle: with his sister and mother, he becomes distant and conflicted; with Razumikhin, his friend, he oscillates between closeness and isolation; and he begins to glimpse the possibility of redemption with Sonia, a poor but compassionate woman who had to prostitute herself to support her family. These relationships highlight how human warmth and moral direction challenge his nihilistic conceptions.

Meanwhile, the investigation led by Porfiry Petrovich, the astute examining magistrate, increases the psychological pressure on Raskolnikov. Porfiry suspects him but uses subtle dialogue rather than direct evidence, leading Raskolnikov to confront his own anguish. Other characters, such as Svidrigailov, a corrupt man associated with Dunia, show the darker paths

Raskolnikov could take. This underscores the novel's exploration of free will and ethical decision-making. This growing tension causes Raskolnikov to oscillate between denial and the impulse to confess, demonstrating how punishment arises in the mind long before the law imposes it.

In the end, Sonia's faith and compassion are central to Raskolnikov's change. She motivates him to admit and face the consequences of his actions, showing suffering as the path to moral rebirth. Finally, when he admits his crime, he is condemned to Siberia, where Sonia follows him with the promise of loyalty and hope. The novel ends not in absolute tragedy, but in a moment of spiritual renewal. Despite being punished by the law, Raskolnikov begins to feel an inner awakening, indicating that new life and redemption can be achieved through love, repentance, and acceptance. Punishment emphasizes Dostoevsky's central idea: that true punishment is a consequence of the weight of conscience and that salvation comes from moral responsibility and human connections.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

3.1 Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative method to understand and interpret the inner life of Rodion Raskolnikov, the protagonist of *Crime and Punishment*, from a literary and psychological perspective. Unlike quantitative approaches, which seek quantifiable or statistical results, the qualitative approach facilitates the exploration of the character's emotions, concepts, conflicts, and contradictions through a detailed and reflective reading of the text. In this type of research, the objective is not to test a specific hypothesis with data, but rather to unravel the hidden meaning behind the character's decisions and how they are affected by his emotional, ethical, and intellectual environment. Therefore, this approach is perfectly suited to literary analysis, as it highlights the subjective and symbolic aspects generally more relevant in a novel of this type.

The qualitative methodology allows for a free and logical understanding of Raskolnikov's behavior. It facilitates the observation of how his moral conflict manifests itself through the language he uses, his changes in posture, his physical reactions, and particularly his reflections. Rather than analyzing what can be reported or evaluated, we examine what can be understood through human experience: emotional suffering, guilt, the conflict between right and proper, and the urgency for redemption. This approach also allows us to incorporate the reader's or researcher's feelings about what is read, given that in the literary field, meanings are often constructed between what the writer writes and what the reader understands.

Furthermore, the qualitative approach allows us to use complex and challenging ideas to objectively define, such as regret, despair, faith, or isolation. These components cannot be categorized with numbers, but they are crucial to understanding the character. Therefore, this

method is perfect for this analysis, as it provides resources for an in-depth examination of the existential conflict experienced by the protagonist. The analysis, through the interpretation of essential fragments of the work, seeks to understand how Dostoevsky portrays an individual confronting himself, deeply devastated, caught between the notion of a higher self and the reality of his conscience. In conclusion, the qualitative approach offers us the opportunity to penetrate the deepest aspects of the text and the character, understanding literature not as an instrument of evaluation, but as a means of experimentation, meditation, and interpretation.

3.1.1 Qualitative Approach

This analysis is based on a qualitative approach, as its purpose is not to examine superficial data or collect measurable data, but rather to uncover the deeper content hidden within the literary narrative. By focusing on the character of Raskolnikov, the aim is to understand his inner universe: his feelings, his disconcerting reflections, his contradictions, and the transformation of his behavior through the narrative. The objective is not limited to detailing what he does, but also to understanding why he does it and how this internal process modifies his perception of life, crime, punishment, and himself. Qualitative methodology allows us to approach these elements from an interpretive perspective, providing a space to understand the symbolic and emotional elements of the text. This is crucial, given that Dostoevsky does not present a uniform character, but rather a person filled with internal conflicts that cannot be assessed, but which can be examined through his language, his behavior, his way of interacting with others, and his psychological responses.

This method is very effective in examining how the character's ethical and existential conflicts are expressed within the narrative structure. For example, the use of interior

monologue, descriptions of the environment, the presence of other characters who act as reflections or counterpoints, and even the pauses and repetitions in Raskolnikov's conversation are all components that reveal his internal conflict. These narrative clues cannot be clarified with numbers or surveys, but rather with a reading that pauses to meditate on their meaning.

Therefore, qualitative analysis helps us read between the lines, identify symbols that symbolize guilt, alienation, or the yearning for redemption, and understand how the novel functions as an exploration of the human spirit rather than a mere detective novel.

Furthermore, the qualitative approach is especially appropriate for addressing emotional and abstract themes such as guilt, remorse, fear, disillusionment, or the demand for forgiveness. These themes are central to *Crime and Punishment*, but they cannot be precisely categorized or assessed. There is no method for determining how much guilt Raskolnikov feels or at what precise moment he begins to transform. However, we can perceive his evolution through his actions, his pauses, his physical and emotional problems, and his way of dealing with his own situation. The qualitative approach facilitates this form of deep and sensitive observation, receptive to diverse interpretations, ideal for a character as complex as Raskolnikov.

Ultimately, this type of analysis does not seek to arrive at a single truth or a definitive conclusion. On the other hand, one of the advantages of the qualitative method is that it allows us to examine the character from different perspectives. His internal conflict can be interpreted as a philosophical dilemma, an emotional crisis, or a spiritual battle, and all these perspectives can coexist. This allows the reader to interpret the text from their own perception and sensibilities, while also allowing the researcher to delve deeper into the different layers of the character. Therefore, a qualitative study not only enriches the interpretation of the text but also assesses the complexity of the work and the human being it portrays.

3.2 Research Method

A research method is the process of systematically collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to answer a specific question or examine a particular topic. Helping the researcher gather reliable data and reach meaningful conclusions, it provides structure and direction to the investigation. A research method guides the analysis of a text in literary studies, whether through close reading, comparison, or theoretical application. Selecting an appropriate method is crucial, as it defines how evidence is gathered and how arguments are substantiated. In this context, a research method is not only a series of steps but also a rational framework that ensures the study remains orderly and focused.

A research method, when applied to literature, allows the reader to approach a text with clarity and purpose. It determines which facet will be analyzed (e.g., characters, themes, or symbols) and which theoretical approach will be used for interpretation. For example, if a psychological approach is used as a research method, a work is analyzed based on psychological concepts, such as internal conflict or the unconscious. This organized procedure helps the researcher establish connections between abstract concepts and specific textual evidence. Typically, the research method transforms reading into a disciplined inquiry and ensures that the analysis is not based solely on opinions but on a coherent and logical interpretation.

3.2.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is an analytical and philosophical perspective that focuses on the direct experience of human consciousness. It analyzes how individuals interpret, feel, and perceive the world around them, prioritizing individual experience over external explanations. Additionally, phenomenology studies how individuals perceive reality: not as an objective fact, but as

something shaped by emotions and perception. This approach views subjective experience as a means of acquiring knowledge and truth, proposing that understanding begins with the way each person experiences and feels things.

Applied to literature, phenomenology helps critics and readers understand how characters experience their experiences. Rather than focusing solely on the plot or events, it focuses on the internal perception of characters: their thoughts, emotions, and consciousness as they interact with the world. This method encourages readers to focus on how characters describe their environment, how they feel about it, and how their perceptions evolve throughout the story. It suggests that literature is not only about what happens, but also about how it is experienced. Through phenomenology, a novel becomes a space where readers can examine human existence from within, sharing the characters' perceptions, uncertainties, and reflections.

Furthermore, phenomenology facilitates a stronger connection between the text and the reader. Readers are encouraged to reflect on their own perceptions and emotions as they delve deeper into the consciousness of fictional characters. This establishes a connection between literature and human experience, where understanding originates not from external analysis but from awareness and empathy. Therefore, by emphasizing the value of personal introspection and emotional depth, phenomenology enriches literary analysis. To truly understand a story, it is necessary not only to analyze it intellectually, but also to experience it through human experience.

3.2.2 Descriptive

The descriptive perspective focuses on observing and capturing a theme as it appears, without attempting to alter or interpret it prematurely. Its main objective is to offer a clear and

detailed picture of what is being investigated, allowing the reader to understand it directly. In the literary field, descriptive perspective helps recognize the fundamental components of a text, such as the emotions of the characters, their environment, and the characters themselves. It seeks to show what is truly present in the work before offering a more in-depth interpretation and is based on detailed observation and faithful representation.

In the field of literary studies, being descriptive involves carefully observing how the story unfolds and how its elements are presented. It allows the reader to perceive the tone, the repetition of words, or the structure of sentences, which give rhythm and meaning to the text. For example, the first step before examining the reasons for the existence of certain emotions is to describe how a character responds to guilt or fear. This method emphasizes detail and precision, allowing the reader to delve deeper into the text and base their analysis on what can be read and seen, not just what is assumed or imagined.

The descriptive approach also supports other analytical methodologies, such as the psychological approach, as it provides the necessary evidence for the interpretation of thoughts or feelings. The reader better understands the emotional and mental depth of characters when a narrative explains how certain emotions are expressed through dialogue, gestures, or internal reflections. Therefore, the descriptive perspective becomes a crucial foundation for any literary analysis, as it merges observation with sensitivity, allowing the text to communicate before any interpretation.

3.2.3 Textual and Contextual Analysis

This study primarily employs two methods: textual and contextual analysis. The literary study is based on an in-depth reading of the work *Crime and Punishment*, focusing especially on

the thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and transformations experienced by the protagonist, Raskolnikov. It involves not only reading the character's actions but also observing how he performs them, the words he uses to express himself, his changes in posture, and the expressions he constantly repeats. This type of reading helps us recognize aspects that reveal his psychological conflict, such as internal monologues, moments of loneliness, contradictions in his thinking, and physical signs that reveal his emotional anxiety. Furthermore, the textual study focuses on fundamental literary components such as symbolism, narrative language, metaphors, and narrative structures that allow us to understand what is going on in his mind. For example, when Raskolnikov isolates himself in his room and dialogues with himself, these scenes clearly reveal his authentic emotional state, without social connotations, and show how he is internally unraveling.

Textual study also provides an opportunity to analyze how Dostoevsky develops the character's transformation through specific narrative devices. Tonal variations in conversations, pauses, the narrator's portrayal of scenes, and Raskolnikov's body language are carefully examined. These details, though subtle, offer multiple clues as to what is happening to the character. For example, his tendency to experience delirium, sweat, become ill, or become agitated for no apparent reason reveals his inner conflict. The goal is that, through a close analysis of these fragments, the reader can understand not only the character's actions but also his motivations, fears, uncertainties, and justifications. This reading approach transforms the text into a valuable resource for exploring human suffering and the discussion between good and evil.

This study, in addition to textual analysis, also includes contextual analysis as an additional method. This means that the novel is not analyzed as an independent document, but as part of a particular historical, cultural, and philosophical period. Although the character is fictional, the

themes he addresses are influenced by the period in which the novel was written. Therefore, it is crucial to consider elements such as 19th-century philosophy, urban poverty in St. Petersburg, moral debates about justice, and prevailing conceptions of the "superior" individual or the outlaw. This context allows us to understand why Raskolnikov believes himself capable of committing a crime for a greater reason, or why he feels so torn between his theory and his conscience. Without this contextual approach, several of the characters' ideas might seem exaggerated or implausible.

Contextual study also gives us the opportunity to appreciate how Dostoevsky used the novel to criticize or reflect on his social environment. Understanding the prevailing political, social, and religious conceptions in 19th-century Russia provides us with further resources for understanding the protagonist's decisions and thinking. For example, many of Raskolnikov's theories about the "extraordinary man" are influenced by the utilitarian or rationalist philosophies prevalent in Europe. These ideas are not the character's own creations, but rather authentic concepts championed by some in their time. Thus, by analyzing the context, we gain a more complete understanding of the character, based not only on emotional elements but also on intellectual and social ones.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

For this study, a data collection table was created to classify and interpret the psychological components that appear in the novel *Crime and Punishment*. This table is a structured tool used to record the moral conflicts, emotional reactions, and thoughts of the protagonist, Raskolnikov. Each part of the table refers to one of the study's purposes: to analyze psychological conflict, recognize ethical issues, and interpret how guilt and redemption have changed. With this

instrument, the researcher could gather evidence directly from the text, including relevant quotes, dialogues, and descriptions. These can be categorized according to the specific emotional or mental aspect they represent.

The table, in addition to helping organize the data, allows us to observe how Raskolnikov's mind slowly evolves throughout the story. By classifying his actions, feelings, and thoughts, we can identify patterns of moral tension, guilt, and instability that lead to his psychological collapse and subsequent renewal. For example, one column may contain textual evidence of his internal discussions, while another examines how these moments reveal his guilt or his longing for redemption. This method ensures that the interpretation is based on textual evidence and appropriate for the purposes of the research. Overall, using this table as a data collection tool provides clarity, consistency, and precision in linking Raskolnikov's behavior to the broader psychological themes examined in the study.

This first table reflects Raskolnikov's internal conflict and emotional instability in *Crime and Punishment*. To better understand how his mind becomes further disturbed when guilt and confusion dominate, we focus on three aspects: his thoughts, his contradictory behavior, and his emotional instability. The "Interpretation" column interprets the moments or quotes in the "Evidence" column, using psychological concepts such as guilt, repression, and conflict between reason and emotion to describe his mental state. By structuring the information in this way, the table illustrates how his thoughts and emotions gradually lead to his collapse and how Dostoevsky uses his character to explore the complexity of the human mind.

Table 1. Raskolnikov's Inner Conflict and Psychological Instability

Aspect	Evidence from the book	Interpretation
Inner Thoughts		
Emotional Instability		
Contradictory Behavior		

Table 1 Illustrates Raskolnikov's internal conflict and emotional instability in Crime and Punishment

This table focuses on Raskolnikov's ethical dilemma and his internal struggle between considering himself above the law and facing the moral consequences of his actions. It examines how his pride and his theory about "extraordinary men" conflict with his conscience, illustrating the tension between morality and intellect. The "Interpretation" column explains these moments from a mental and emotional perspective, while the "Literary Evidence" column includes examples that demonstrate his efforts to justify the crime and his subsequent sense of guilt. This table highlights the intense battle between reason and conscience in his internal debate, revealing that his moral crisis is the factor that gradually leads him to confession and redemption.

Table 2. Raskolnikov's Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Conflict

Aspect	Evidence from the book	Interpretation
Belief in being above the law		
Moral consequences of his actions		

Conflict between intellect and conscience		
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Table 2 Illustrates Raskolnikov's ethical dilemma and his internal struggle

This table focuses on Raskolnikov's growing guilt, his longing for redemption, and the change he experiences as he faces the repercussions of his crime. It shows how his emotions of guilt begin to influence his thoughts and feelings, shifting from denial to acceptance. The "Interpretation" column describes these moments as signs of inner healing and moral awakening, while the "Evidence" column includes moments that show his pain and his search for absolution. This table illustrates how guilt transforms into a turning point that leads him to introspection and, ultimately, spiritual transformation and redemption.

Table 3. Raskolnikov's guilt, redemption, and transformation

Aspect	Evidence from the book	Interpretation
Growing guilt		
Desire for redemption		
Mental and emotional transformation		

Table 3 Illustrates Raskolnikov's Guilt, Redemption, and Transformation of his crime

3.5.1 Units of Analysis

In this analysis, the main themes of the work are classified into three main categories: the fundamental themes, the most significant characters in Raskolnikov's psychological development, and the narrative structure employed by Dostoevsky. These three components are

essential to understanding the construction and representation of the protagonist's internal conflict throughout the narrative. Studying them allows us to appreciate how the writer communicates complex concepts such as guilt, remorse, isolation, and the search for meaning, and how these concepts are established in the plot through the protagonist's thoughts, actions, and feelings. Regarding the themes, the most prominent are the ethical conflict between good and evil, guilt as psychological punishment, redemption as personal change, and isolation because of ethically questionable decisions. These themes intersect throughout Raskolnikov's life, as each affects his understanding of and reaction to reality. The way he seeks to justify his crime, his handling of guilt even before committing it, and his yearning for redemption reveal an internal evolution that reflects the ethical tensions many people experience, especially when they violate their own principles.

Regarding the characters, the focus is on Raskolnikov, as he symbolizes the core of the analysis. However, the role of secondary characters such as Sonia, Porfiry, and, to some extent, Dunya and Marmeladov are also considered, as each acts as a reflection or foil that emphasizes fundamental elements of the protagonist's conflict. Sonia symbolizes compassion and faith, transforming into a figure who guides Raskolnikov toward repentance. Porfiry, on the other hand, acts as a rational figure who confronts him on a moral level. These characters are not analyzed in depth but are incorporated when their presence directly influences the protagonist's emotional development.

Finally, the work's narrative structure is examined, particularly the use of internal monologue, third-person narration with an internal focus, and the stylistic elements that allow the reader to understand the protagonist's mind. These narrative components are crucial to understanding the character's psychological development, given that much of the conflict

originates within him. Furthermore, the way Dostoevsky combines moments of introspection, fantasies, and physical reactions reinforces the idea that crime is not simply an external action, but an internal struggle that finds intense and constant expression in the character. The narrative structure also helps illustrate how the protagonist's thoughts gradually transform, a crucial aspect for the analysis presented in this work.

3.5.2 Population and Sample

In this analysis, the researcher focuses on the complete work of *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky, a work that symbolizes one of the most profound meditations on the human spirit in world literature. It is not only a matter of reading what happens in the narrative, but of going beyond the plot to understand the more human, philosophical, and psychological meaning that resides in every action and reflection of the protagonist. This work is replete with symbols, concepts, and internal conflicts that illustrate how an individual can fall into a profound ethical crisis that ultimately impacts their body, their interactions, and their perspective on the world. Therefore, the research is not limited solely to the literal text but also considers the historical and social context of 19th-century Russia, the dominant ethical conceptions of that period, the philosophical trends that influenced Dostoevsky, and the external elements that may have influenced the development of a character as complex as Raskolnikov.

This broader approach is crucial because it helps us understand that the character's decisions do not arise unexpectedly but rather maintain a deep connection with his environment. Raskolnikov's behavior is governed not only by his personal reflections but also by what he perceives in his surroundings: extreme poverty, social despair, the idea that some individuals can transcend the law, and the search for meaning in a seemingly unjust world. Therefore, while the

analysis focuses on the character and his internal conflict, it is recognized that this conflict is affected by his environment and cannot be fully understood without considering these external elements. In short, this analysis seeks to find the balance between what Raskolnikov thinks and feels and the environment that reinforces his thoughts.

However, it is also understood that a complete analysis of the novel with the same depth would be excessive and not always essential for this study. Therefore, it was decided to work with a select sample of fragments, meticulously selected for their direct relevance to the character's psychological development. This sample includes scenes in which the protagonist meditates alone aloud, moments in which his thoughts contradict each other, interactions with other characters that provoke changes in his way of thinking, and circumstances in which his body responds drastically to guilt or emotional stress. These parts of the text are not only relevant to understanding the development of the story but are also crucial to understanding the essential concepts of this analysis: guilt, fear, internal conflict, the moral justification of the crime, and the search for redemption.

Furthermore, we prioritized those fragments where Dostoevsky's narrative style provides the most obvious access to the character's mind. For example, the internal dialogues in which Raskolnikov speaks to himself, the abrupt shifts in his thinking, the justifications he offers for his physical discomfort when he feels emotionally overwhelmed, and his answers to simple questions that reveal much more than his words convey. These scenes clearly demonstrate that the character's true conflict lies not in his external actions, but in his internal experiences, in that incessant struggle between his reason and his conscience. This is precisely the core of this study: analyzing how the writer expresses this internal struggle through language, narrative, and the protagonist's emotions.

Thus, the selection of the sample allows us to focus the study on its main objective: understanding how Dostoevsky, through the character of Raskolnikov, symbolizes the struggle between what is considered right and what is truly perceived as right. This choice reveals how this conflict impacts his behavior, his decisions, his mental well-being, and his way of interacting with the world. This avoids a superficial interpretation of the text and facilitates a deeper and more complete interpretation, without the obligation to cover the entire novel word for word.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis method for this research is based on an exhaustive, thoughtful, and critical reading of selected excerpts from the novel *Crime and Punishment*. As a qualitative study of a literary and psychological nature, the analysis does not follow numerical procedures or established structures but rather focuses on a detailed interpretation of the content. The main objective is to unravel the hidden meaning in the thoughts, feelings, and decisions of the protagonist, Raskolnikov, and to understand how these factors interrelate in the evolution of his internal conflict. This procedure begins with the selection of essential passages, chosen not for their relevance to the overall plot, but for their symbolic, emotional, or psychological significance. Each of these excerpts is examined based on what it reveals about the character's emotional state, either explicitly or implicitly.

One of the key elements to consider is the representation of guilt before, during, and after the crime, and how it is expressed in both the character's thoughts and body. The analysis also considers how the text's language manifests Raskolnikov's emotional decline: confusing expressions, internal monologues filled with contradictions, dark imagery, and moments of disorientation that reveal his instability. These components of the text are not analyzed

individually, but within the framework of Raskolnikov's moral conflict. Each word and emotional response is analyzed from the perspective of its relevance to his personal growth and what Dostoevsky seeks to convey about the human condition through his experience.

Furthermore, the study considers the effect of some secondary characters who, although not the subject of study, function as catalysts for the protagonist's conflict. For example, the moments when Sonia confronts him with faith and humility, or when Porfirio indirectly questions him, are vital to understanding how Raskolnikov begins to disintegrate internally. The character's behavior in these interactions, regardless of whether he reacts with evasion, aggression, or silence, is evaluated based on his emotional state and his ability to justify the crime he has plotted in his mind. In addition, we consider moments of intense loneliness, when his perception intensifies and his internal discourse manifests anxiety, fear, and a constant struggle between what he thinks and what he experiences.

Another crucial component to examine is the character's evolution throughout the narrative. This is not an abrupt or linear transformation, but rather a process filled with oscillations, contradictions, relapses, and moments of clarity. By studying these emotional cycles, we try to demonstrate how the character transitions from theoretical self-confidence to a state of moral exhaustion. This journey is relevant because it allows us to understand that redemption or punishment does not emerge suddenly but is gradually constructed in the protagonist's mind. Therefore, the study reveals how Raskolnikov progressively loses control of his own conscience and how guilt functions as a more powerful judge than any external court.

Finally, this analysis is reinforced using secondary sources that allow for contrasting or enriching interpretations. Critical analyses of the novel, publications that examine Raskolnikov from a psychological perspective, and writings on the philosophy of good and evil in

Dostoevsky's work are considered. These resources facilitate a detailed exploration of some discoveries, providing new perspectives that enrich the interpretation of the character and his internal conflicts. However, the focus is always on the text itself, prioritizing what the work conveys through its own narrative tools. The analysis does not aim to impose an exclusive interpretation, but rather to investigate how language, structure, and emotions reveal the most human conflict of all: the struggle between what one considers appropriate and what the heart cannot accept.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

The analysis in this chapter seeks to understand Raskolnikov's psychological development in *Crime and Punishment* and how his thoughts, emotions, and actions reveal a constant inner struggle. The main objective is to recognize how fear, guilt, pride, and the search for meaning influence his behavior throughout the novel. The analysis focuses on crucial scenes that illustrate the evolution of his character, his inner torment, and the consequences of his decisions in confronting it. These selected moments are directly linked to the research objectives, which seek to clarify how his psychological conflict leads to transformation. Through a meticulous analysis of these circumstances, the development of his consciousness and the causes of his emotional crisis are clarified.

A triangulation method is implemented to ensure that the analysis is comprehensive and reliable. This means that the interpretation integrates three fundamental sources: literary criticism, the perspectives of psychology specialists, and my own critical analysis as a researcher. The primary data, which includes descriptions, dialogues, and interior monologues that reveal Raskolnikov's feelings and thoughts, are drawn from the novel itself. These details allow us to observe how his mental state changes throughout the story, from beginning to end, especially after the crime. Every action and reaction offers relevant information for understanding his behavior.

Likewise, expert theories are employed to support the interpretation of these behaviors. The theories of Freud, Jung, and other experts help explain why Raskolnikov feels fear, anxiety, and guilt, even as he attempts to project an image of strength and confidence. The symptoms that

manifest, such as isolation, illness, and nightmares, are understood through psychological knowledge. The analysis is strengthened by incorporating expert perspectives, as it is based not only on the story itself but also on theories that have been studied and accepted for a long time. This connection demonstrates that his psychological struggle is genuine and reflects authentic human experiences.

Finally, the researcher's interpretation is crucial for linking the theories to the novel. This encompasses observations, personal reasoning, and reflections on what the evidence reveals about Raskolnikov's mental state. Through comparison and analysis, we understand how the character moves from denial to acceptance and how his transformation is driven by guilt. My analysis helps to describe the significance of key scenes and what they reveal about the character's inner world.

The triangulation technique ensures that the analysis is thorough, reasoned, and solidly grounded by combining these three components: analytical interpretation, expert opinions, and narrative evidence. This method demonstrates that Raskolnikov's conflict is not merely a plot element but represents the very essence of the novel. It also helps to demonstrate Dostoevsky's purpose of exploring the human mind and exposing how feelings such as fear and guilt can completely control a person. The working method clarifies the results of the analysis and allows for a complete and meaningful understanding of the character's psychological journey.

4.1 Approaches to the Investigation

In research, an approach is the form or perspective used to analyze and understand a topic. It provides the direction and structure that guides the researcher in interpreting data and formulating conclusions. Each perspective offers a particular way of observing reality: some

focus on social issues, others on history, and others, such as the psychological approach, on emotions and the mind. The psychological approach investigates how people think, feel, and act, to understand the motives behind their actions. This approach, applied to literature, helps uncover the mental processes and emotional struggles that influence the decisions and development of characters. It transforms reading into a deeper exploration of human nature, rather than simply following the narrative thread.

This approach is central to *Crime and Punishment*, as the book revolves around the complexity of Raskolnikov's thinking. This character's emotional instability, guilt, and thoughts indicate that his psychological journey transcends the crime itself. The reader can observe how his emotions and thoughts represent authentic human conflicts, such as the search for meaning, pride, and guilt, through a psychological perspective. Dostoevsky does not limit himself to describing external events but also opens a window into the inner world of an individual torn between conscience and logic. From this perspective, the analysis focuses on understanding his internal changes and motivations, rather than simply describing his actions.

This relationship between the book and the psychological perspective demonstrates that *Crime and Punishment* go beyond being a simple narrative about a crime; it is an inquiry into the human condition. From this perspective, Raskolnikov describes how the mind can be divided between what it yearns for and what it clearly believes is right. His internal struggle demonstrates how guilt and moral conscience can radically change an individual. Consequently, the psychological approach not only helps explain the character's behavior but also demonstrates that Dostoevsky sought to describe the complexities of the human spirit.

4.2 Theories vs Literary Work

In this part of the study, selected sections of *Crime and Punishment* are analyzed in relation to the psychological theories previously discussed. These theories serve as the foundation for interpreting Raskolnikov's internal conflict, his emotional instability, and his path toward redemption. Each selected moment from the novel is supported by concepts from Freud, Jung, and Lacan, which help explain the complexity of his mental and moral struggle. By connecting theory and literature, the analysis demonstrates how Dostoevsky uses Raskolnikov's experiences to reflect universal psychological processes such as guilt, repression, and transformation. Therefore, the following analysis not only describes events from the story but interprets them through a theoretical lens that reveals the depth of the character's mind and the author's exploration of human psychology.

Table 1 illustrates the first and most unstable phase of Raskolnikov's psychological journey: the period dominated by internal conflict and confusion. Through his thoughts, emotions, and actions, Dostoevsky shows a man torn between his moral sense and his pride. He attempts to rationalize the murder as an act of logic and necessity, but his own mind resists this idea, revealing the weakness of human reasoning in the face of conscience. Experts like Freud describe this as the "ego defense mechanism," where a person uses justification to protect themselves from guilt. In Raskolnikov's case, the defense fails: his conscience reappears again in the form of fear, anxiety, and self-isolation.

Raskolnikov's emotional instability also reveals Dostoevsky's deep understanding of the human psyche. According to psychological theory, emotions often expose the truths that logic tries to hide. His fevers, nightmares, and panic are signs of a moral illness: the symptoms of a

soul at war with itself. From my perspective, Dostoevsky demonstrates that guilt has physical consequences and that denying moral responsibility leads to mental collapse.

Finally, his contradictory behavior highlights the tension between guilt and the need for redemption. Even when Raskolnikov tries to appear distant, he cannot help but seek human contact, especially through Sonia. This research demonstrates that no person, no matter how strong, can fully survive without compassion and morality. The first panel, therefore, represents the psychological foundation of the novel: the conflict between intellect and conscience, where guilt becomes the silent force that shapes the protagonist's every thought and action.

Table 1. Raskolnikov's Inner Conflict and Psychological Instability

Aspect	Evidence from the book	Interpretation
Inner Thoughts	Raskolnikov is convinced that murdering the moneylender is an ethical duty that will allow him to justify his actions and feels an internal conflict.	From a psychological perspective, his reasoning reveals a confrontation between the conscious mind and the unconscious. Freud argues that this type of conflict occurs when the ego seeks to balance individual desire (the id) and moral obligation (the superego). I interpret Raskolnikov's rationalizations as his way of defending himself against guilt,

		but deep down, he is aware that no intellectual reasoning can engage his conscience.
Emotional Instability	After the murder, Raskolnikov suffers from fever, paranoia, and constant anxiety, frequently isolating himself from society.	His emotional instability reveals how guilt begins to unconsciously dominate him. According to Jung, physical and mental symptoms are the pathways through which repressed emotions return. In my opinion, Dostoevsky uses these symptoms to show how the human mind responds when attempting to utilize moral suffering. His illness is not only physical but also the visible manifestation of punishment on a psychological level.
Contradictory Behavior	Despite his isolation, Raskolnikov seeks solace in Sonia, shows empathy for others, and tries to act logically and calmly.	His contradictory behavior reveals the conflict between reason and emotion. Freud's theory of repression proposes that when guilt is repressed, it

		reappears through unforeseen acts. Personally, I see this as proof that Raskolnikov is unable to completely shed his humanity; his need for connection reveals his unconscious longing for forgiveness and redemption.
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Table 1 Illustrates Raskolnikov's internal conflict and emotional instability in Crime and Punishment

Table 2 analyzes Raskolnikov's ethical and moral conflict, a key component in his psychological evolution. His belief that he is "above the law" reveals a dangerous form of self-deception. Dostoevsky uses this idea to illustrate how pride and intellectual arrogance can undermine moral understanding. From a psychological perspective, Raskolnikov's theory demonstrates a defense mechanism that makes it easier for him to justify his crime without having to directly confront guilt. Freud would describe it as a mode of rationalization: the moment when someone generates logical explanations to protect themselves from emotional wounds. However, as the novel shows, these defenses are temporary. As Raskolnikov clings more tightly to his theory, his mind increasingly betrays him through fear and instability.

The impossibility of escaping one's conscience is evident in the moral consequences of his actions. His fear, disgust, and constant reminiscences of the murder demonstrate that logic cannot silence guilt. Dostoevsky masterfully transforms this inner suffering into a reflection of the human condition. In my opinion, this section of the story demonstrates that every person has

an inner moral voice that cannot be ignored, no matter how strong their ambition or intellect. The return of guilt is not a social punishment, but a natural reaction of the mind in search of truth and balance.

The confrontation with Porphyry shows that Raskolnikov has completely lost intellectual control. His theories no longer protect him, and his conscience begins to speak louder than his own words. This scene represents what Jung calls the emergence of the "shadow self," the moment when someone is forced to confront the aspects of themselves, they try to hide. In my opinion, this is one of the most striking psychological moments in the book, as it illustrates how change begins to develop in Raskolnikov. The table, therefore, symbolizes an intermediate phase of his psychological journey: the moment when his pride is challenged, his mind begins to fragment, and the path to redemption gradually begins to take shape.

Table 2. Raskolnikov's Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Conflict

Aspect	Evidence from the book	Interpretation
Belief in being above the law	Raskolnikov argues that there are individuals, like Napoleon, who are "extraordinary men" and can violate moral laws if their intentions benefit humanity.	This conviction symbolizes his intellectual pride and his effort to justify the crime. According to Freud, this demonstrates the dominance of the ego, which seeks authority and justification even when his actions are not morally correct. In my opinion, Raskolnikov's theory is used to

		<p>silence his guilt and maintain a sense of superiority. It demonstrates that intelligence, by losing its connection to empathy, becomes destructive.</p>
<p>Moral consequences of his actions</p>	<p>After the murder, Raskolnikov feels fear and repulsion every time he recalls the murder or hears the name of the moneylender.</p>	<p>What Freud calls the return of the repressed is reflected in his reactions: the realization that guilt and moral conscience cannot be completely buried. These emotional aftereffects seem to me to be proof that Raskolnikov's conscience is more powerful than his theories. Morality, according to Dostoevsky, is not a social norm, but a psychological truth that inevitably emerges in the human mind.</p>
<p>Conflict between intellect and conscience</p>	<p>When Porfiry questions him, Raskolnikov attempts to justify his theory with logic; however,</p>	<p>This conflict evidences the collapse of his intellectual defenses. Jung would describe it as the moment when the shadow,</p>

	his growing anxiety and nervousness reveal his guilt.	the hidden aspect of the self, emerges. In my opinion, this is where his humanity begins to be reborn, as the mask of reason can no longer hide the underlying emotional chaos. His conscience grows stronger than his intellect.
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Table 2 Illustrates Raskolnikov's ethical dilemma and his internal struggle

Table 3 represents the culminating and most important phase of Raskolnikov's psychological evolution: his emotional journey and his transition from guilt to redemption. Guilt is an imperceptible force that, throughout the novel, shapes his actions and thoughts. At first, he attempts to justify his actions with logical reasoning, but over time, his conscience strengthens and begins to invade his dreams and daily life. Nightmares represent his difficulty in freeing himself from the moral consequences of his actions. Freud argues that guilt is one of the most intense feelings of the human psyche, originating in the superego's demand for moral balance. In my interpretation, Dostoevsky presents guilt not as an external punishment, but as a natural function of the brain that reminds Raskolnikov of his own humanity.

The longing for redemption arises when Raskolnikov meets Sonia, who becomes his guide in the moral and emotional realms. She listens to him, absorbs him, and offers him a spiritual perspective that contrasts with his rationalism. Through her, Dostoevsky presents the possibility of renewal in moral terms. From a psychological perspective, Sonia's role aligns with Jung's

theory of the anima: the inner feminine element that leads to self-awareness and balance. For me, Sonia represents unconditional compassion and understanding, aspects that gradually bring Raskolnikov's repressed emotional side to light. Her presence demonstrates that redemption is not an abstract concept, but a process that begins when someone admits their vulnerability.

Raskolnikov is completely transformed upon confessing and living in Siberia. When he stops fighting his conscience and accepts his guilt, he begins to feel peace and self-acceptance. This period can be considered what Jung calls "individuation," that is, the integration of all aspects of the self in harmony. From my perspective, this change is a manifestation of Dostoevsky's idea that human suffering can lead to spiritual and moral enlightenment. Raskolnikov's journey ends not in despair, but in renewal, which represents the victory of conscience over pride and the healing power of redemption. Therefore, this painting reflects the outcome of his psychological journey: from moral blindness to emotional rebirth.

Table 3. Raskolnikov's Guilt, Redemption, and Transformation

Aspect	Evidence from the book	Interpretation
Growing guilt	Raskolnikov begins to experience intense nightmares about the murder and feels trapped by his own thoughts and fears.	His growing guilt symbolizes the absolute return of his repressed conscience. Freud would describe it as the "superego" taking control, forcing him to confront the moral burden of his crime. In

		<p>my opinion, these dreams show that guilt cannot be buried; it becomes part of the mind and demands to be acknowledged. Dostoevsky uses guilt to reflect Raskolnikov's humanity, showing that his punishment begins long before his confession.</p>
Desire for redemption	His growing relationship with Sonia, a symbol of compassion and faith, encourages him to confess and accept his punishment.	<p>Sonia functions as a psychological catalyst: her capacity for empathy brings his repressed feelings to the surface. Jung could have argued that she symbolizes the "anima," or the moral light that stabilizes the unconscious. In my opinion, Sonia represents the power of forgiveness by teaching Raskolnikov that redemption does not consist in running away from guilt, but in</p>

		accepting it as a healing element.
Mental and emotional transformation	After his confession and his stay in Siberia, Raskolnikov begins to feel peace and emotional clarity for the first time.	This transformation represents the rebirth of his conscience and ethical identity. By accepting guilt, we achieve psychological integration, which is the balance between emotions, ego, and conscience. In my opinion, this is Dostoevsky's message: true freedom lies not in being superior or intelligent, but in recognizing our humanity.

Table 3 Illustrates Raskolnikov's guilt, redemption, and transformation of his crime

1.3 Themes, Motifs, and Symbols

1.3.1 Themes

The theme is the central concept or underlying message that gives meaning to a literary work. It reveals the author's perspective on universal human experiences, such as remorse, morality, or redemption. Themes encompass more than mere historical events; they reveal the profound meaning inherent in events and the characters' inner transformations. In *Crime and Punishment*, Fyodor Dostoevsky addresses ethical and psychological questions that explore the human mind in conflict with itself. The novel examines the repercussions of intellectual pride,

the suffering of guilt, and the quest for moral renewal through Raskolnikov's experiences. These themes are not isolated but interact, shaping Raskolnikov's psychological development from denial to redemption. Dostoevsky's thematic construction demonstrates his understanding of psychology, even before it was formally established as a science, by presenting inner suffering as the true context for both punishment and salvation.

Table 4. Themes

Theme	Evidence from the book	Psychological interpretation
Guilt and Moral Conflict	After murdering the pawnbroker, Raskolnikov is overwhelmed by fear, paranoia, and self-loathing. He feels an uncontrollable urge to cover up the crime, but his conscience relentlessly torments him with nightmares and sudden anxiety attacks.	This theme shows that guilt is an inevitable psychological consequence of transgressing moral boundaries. According to Freud, the ego is punished by the superego through feelings of fear and remorse when these boundaries are crossed. Dostoevsky describes guilt not as an external punishment, but as an internal psychological force that controls thought, feelings, and even physical health.
Isolation and Alienation	Raskolnikov withdraws from his mother, his sister, and his friends, convinced that solitude demonstrates his independence and superiority. However, his isolation exacerbates his	This theme examines the connection between mental deterioration and alienation. When there is no connection with other human beings, self-fragments lead to emotional imbalance and obsessive

	instability and deepens his moral confusion.	thoughts. From Jung's perspective, loneliness hinders integration with others and allows Raskolnikov to act under the sway of his "shadow," that is, his darkest instincts.
Redemption and transformation	After meeting Sonia, Raskolnikov begins to confront his conscience. Thanks to her compassion and his eventual confession, he feels emotionally liberated and can start anew.	This theme illustrates the healing process that occurs after the identification of guilt. This transformation, from a psychological perspective, involves the incorporation of repressed feelings and the acceptance of moral duty. The emotional purification that allows for the restoration of balance between conscience and mind symbolizes redemption.
The conflict between reason and emotion	Throughout the novel, Raskolnikov attempts to justify the murder through logic, arguing that "exceptional men" can act outside the bounds of moral law; however, his feelings contradict this idea.	This theme represents the psychological tension between intellect and conscience. Raskolnikov's rational theories clash with his emotional reality, revealing that logic cannot silence moral truth. The constant internal struggle demonstrates the limits of reason and the preeminence of emotional honesty over abstract concepts.

The search for meaning through suffering	Raskolnikov gradually comes to understand that suffering is not only a punishment but also a path to inner peace and understanding.	Dostoevsky portrays suffering as a psychological and moral revelation. Through it, Raskolnikov reconnects with his humanity. From a psychological perspective, suffering functions as an emotional confrontation with oneself, enabling inner reflection and renewal.
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Table 4 illustrates the research by identifying the main psychological dimensions that define Raskolnikov's evolution

In this first table, the themes that comprise *Crime and Punishment* are not exclusively philosophical or moral; they constitute the psychological context through which Dostoevsky analyzes the complex nature of the human mind. The novel is marked by the question of guilt and moral conflict, which shape both the character of Raskolnikov and the narrative itself. His guilt is not an instantaneous recognition of wrongdoing, but rather gradually infiltrates his consciousness and manifests itself through dreams, paranoia, and erratic behavior. According to Freud's theory, the superego is an internalized moral authority, and when ethical norms are broken, it inflicts emotional pain. In this sense, guilt acts as an invisible punishment. Dostoevsky transforms this theory into fiction, demonstrating that true punishment does not come from external law, but from the intellect's relentless awareness of its own corruption.

The theme of isolation and alienation explores the psychological effects of distancing oneself from human empathy. Raskolnikov's belief in his intellectual superiority becomes his greatest weakness. The more he isolates himself, the more he loses perspective and emotional connection. His rejection of compassion and his disconnection from others, above all, lead to the

fragmentation of his psyche. In Jungian terms, this detachment allows his “shadow”—the repressed and hidden part of the self—to emerge uncontrollably. The danger of a mind that pursues power without moral connection manifests itself in the distortion of its moral reasoning. Dostoevsky describes alienation as a mental affliction of the soul in which pride turns intellect into madness.

The psychological restoration that follows confession and self-awareness is the theme of redemption and transformation. Empathy is presented as the antidote to guilt when Raskolnikov meets Sonia. Her presence represents unconditional acceptance, forgiveness, and compassion, allowing him to confront what he had been denying. From a psychological perspective, this transformation reflects the process of catharsis: an emotional release that leads to inner healing. Raskolnikov unifies his fragmented identity by accepting his crime and his pain. This reintegration represents the restoration of balance between morality, the self, and emotions. The process Dostoevsky employs demonstrates that redemption is not a religious miracle, but a psychological necessity: admitting guilt leads to the resurrection of the self.

The confrontation between emotion and reason reveals one of the most complex psychological dynamics in history. Raskolnikov attempts to rationalize his crime as an intellectual experiment, but his emotions continually oppose his logic. His cold logic is a defense mechanism, a psychological barrier against the emotional suffering caused by guilt. However, Dostoevsky shows that conscience cannot be completely repressed by intellect. The resulting tension reveals the instability of a mind torn between two forces: emotion, represented as truth, and rationality, as negation. This theme exemplifies psychological realism, in which Dostoevsky describes consciousness as a battle between emotions and ideas struggling to prevail.

The search for meaning through suffering ultimately reveals Dostoevsky's moral and psychological perspective on redemption. For Raskolnikov, suffering becomes a means of self-discovery. It forces him to confront his humanity and understand that true greatness lies not in power, but in humility. From a psychological perspective, suffering acts as a purifying process on an emotional level: it is a confrontation with repressed guilt that leads to self-knowledge. The author uses this theme to suggest that pain does not destroy, but transforms it into teaching moral truth, restores empathy, and reconciles humanity with the world.

Through these interrelated themes, Dostoevsky develops a profound psychological analysis of guilt, redemption, and pride. *Crime and Punishment* not only focuses on moral instruction but also examines how the human conscience functions under extreme pressure. Each theme represents a phase in Raskolnikov's inner development and demonstrates that punishment is not external confinement, but rather the mental process of confronting one's own conscience.

1.3.2 Motifs

A motif is an image, idea, or circumstance that is repeated throughout a literary work to reinforce its emotional atmosphere and main themes. Unlike a theme, a motif is a concrete and recurring element that lends rhythm and coherence to the narrative. Motifs allow us to discover the emotional intensity of the story, the author's moral message, and the inner state of the characters. In *Crime and Punishment*, according to Fyodor Dostoevsky, motifs are used that function as psychological indicators of Raskolnikov's subconscious. The repeated references to illnesses, dreams, and contrasting situations form a cyclical pattern that reveals the protagonist's psychological instability. Each motif reflects his emotional turmoil and moral tension, transforming his internal struggles into observable components of the narrative and his behavior.

Table 5. Motifs

Motifs	Evidence from the book	Psychological interpretation
Dreams and nightmares	Raskolnikov often has vivid and disturbing dreams, such as seeing himself as a child witnessing acts of cruelty or reliving the murder through hallucinations.	Dreams function as a gateway to the unconscious. They reveal repressed guilt and moral fear, corroborating Freud's theory that the unconscious manifests what the conscious mind seeks to conceal. Nightmares are the external manifestation of the mental punishment that the conscious mind refuses to confront.
Illness and fever	After the murder, Raskolnikov suffers from fever, delirium, and physical exhaustion, frequently losing touch with reality and time.	Illness represents the psychosomatic effect of guilt. The body becomes a mirror of the tormented mind. Dostoevsky transforms physical frailty into a psychological metaphor, showing how illness reflects emotional tension and

		functions as an internal form of punishment.
Crime and punishment contrast	The criminal act and its emotional and moral repercussions are a recurring theme throughout the story. Raskolnikov is convinced that the crime will liberate him, but it enslaves him mentally and spiritually.	This motif illustrates the psychological law of causality: every immoral action generates an internal reaction. The contrast emphasizes the futility of rationalizing evil, reinforcing the idea that intellect and ideology cannot silence conscience.
Encounters and Coincidences	Raskolnikov repeatedly encounters people connected to the murder or his guilt, such as Sonya, Marmeladov, and Porfiry. These encounters seem casual, but they intensify his emotional anguish.	These moments act as expressions of the subconscious. They symbolize the compulsion to confront the repressed. Frequent encounters demonstrate psychologically

		that the confrontation between guilt and truth is inevitable.
Inner monologue	Raskolnikov's incessant internal dialogue reveals his fragmented mind as he debates with himself and attempts to justify his actions.	The motif reveals a fragmented consciousness. His reflections illustrate the tension between the superego and the ego, as well as between remorse and justification. This internal dialogue serves as a narrative representation of the conflict at a psychological level.

Table 5 illustrates the research by showing how repetitive narrative patterns reflect the persistence of psychological conflict

In this second table, the recurring motifs in *Crime and Punishment* serve as a map of Raskolnikov's mental journey. Each time they appear, the reader gains a deeper understanding of his own conscience and emotional instability. The relationship between the unconscious and guilt is evident in the very nature of his nightmares and dreams. Through dreams, Dostoevsky reveals the truth that Raskolnikov's reason refuses to acknowledge. Freudian theory of dream analysis proposes that repressed fears and desires emerge symbolically within them. In this work of fiction, the recurring dreams are not random occurrences: they symbolize the voice of conscience breaking through repression. The nightmares act as moral awakenings, forcing him to confront the emotional repercussions of his intellectual pride.

Physical suffering becomes a reflection of inner torment when fever and illness have a cause. Raskolnikov's fatigue, hallucinations, and feverish state represent the price the human mind pays for guilt. Dostoevsky portrays illness as both punishment and purification: the body reacts violently to the burden of transgressing moral norms. This motif aligns psychologically with the idea of psychosomatic expression, in which physical symptoms are a consequence of emotional suffering. Through this recurring weakness, the author underscores that guilt is not confined to thought; it manifests at all levels of existence and connects body, soul, and mind.

The opposition between crime and punishment constitutes the structural foundation of the novel. Dostoevsky employs it to demonstrate that punishment begins the moment the crime is committed. Raskolnikov experiences constant fear, self-loathing, and hallucinations even before confessing. This demonstrates that moral punishment is not only legal or social, but also internal and psychological. This reinforces Dostoevsky's idea that the human conscience harbors its own system of justice. The illusion of power is also presented through the motive: Raskolnikov believes that murder will allow him to demonstrate his superiority, but it traps him in isolation and guilt.

The recurring encounters and coincidences between the characters intensify the novel's psychological tension. Each time he meets someone, Raskolnikov relives his guilt, whether through Porfiry's subtle questions or Sonia's silent compassion. From a psychological perspective, these repetitions illustrate what Freud termed the "repetition compulsion": the mind's impulse to relive traumatic experiences in an unconscious effort to resolve them. Dostoevsky employs this pattern to suggest that moral confrontation is inevitable; the truth will always resurface until it is consciously acknowledged.

Interior monologue is one of the most significant narrative devices in Dostoevsky's work. The reader is constantly inside Raskolnikov's mind, observing the conflict between opposing voices: one embodying logic and superiority, and another representing guilt and empathy. This continuous internal dialogue transforms the narrative into a psychological case study. It reveals the instability of moral identity, the fragmentation of consciousness, and the collapse of reason under emotional pressure. This motif reflects the essence of Dostoevsky's psychological realism: the human mind is not presented as a single voice, but as a battlefield riddled with contradictions.

Through these motifs, Dostoevsky achieves a unique synthesis of psychology and literature. The cyclical nature of guilt and the persistence of the unconscious are manifested through the recurrence of dreams, illnesses, encounters, and thoughts. Each motif supports the idea that punishment is more of an internal than an external process. Together, they trace Raskolnikov's journey from denial and repression to acceptance and confession, demonstrating that true freedom can only be attained through moral truth and psychological self-awareness.

1.3.3 Symbols

In literature, a symbol is something tangible—an object, a color, an action, or a setting—that symbolizes a deeper, more abstract idea or a complex state of mind. Symbols convey meanings that transcend their literal sense, offering the author the opportunity to communicate complex philosophical or psychological concepts through seemingly simple elements. Fyodor Dostoevsky employs symbolism in *Crime and Punishment* to explore the inner conflicts of the human mind, particularly those of Raskolnikov. His internal struggle between guilt, pride, and redemption is illustrated through recurring symbolic imagery. These symbols help translate the invisible elements of his psyche, such as spiritual awakening, conscience, and fear, into signs that can be observed and interpreted within the narrative. By examining these symbols from a psychological

perspective, one can understand how Dostoevsky connects material components with mental states and emotions, thereby transforming physical environments and objects into mirrors of Raskolnikov's psychological reality.

Table 6. Symbols

Symbols	Evidence from the book	Psychological Interpretation
The Cross	Sonya gives Raskolnikov a small cross to wear before his confession, encouraging him to accept suffering and truth as the path to peace.	The cross serves as an emblem of moral rebirth and the incorporation of guilt into one's being. From a psychological perspective, it marks the moment when Raskolnikov's conscience (the superego) begins to be accepted by his ego. It represents the transition from denial to self-awareness, symbolizing purification through suffering.
The City of St. Petersburg	The city is repeatedly described as oppressive, dirty, and congested, brimming with anguish and tension that reflect Raskolnikov's own nervousness.	The city has become an external representation of Raskolnikov's tumultuous inner world. His mental anguish and alienation manifest through a suffocating atmosphere. Psychologically, the

		city represents the projection of its subconscious turmoil: fear and guilt are reflected in the environment, demonstrating the connection between place and mind.
Doors and Thresholds	Raskolnikov often hesitates before entering any room, especially when going to the police station, seeing Sonya, or visiting the pawnbroker.	The thresholds and doorways represent the psychological obstacles encountered between the various phases of his mental development. Each hesitation reflects the struggle between his rational theories and his emotional conscience. Crossing a threshold implies an internal transition, moving from repression to acknowledgment or from pride to acceptance.
Money and the Axe	Throughout the story, the objects used in the crime—the money and the axe—reappear as reminders of Raskolnikov's guilt.	These elements represent moral corruption and the destructive power of rationalization. The axe symbolizes the violence born of intellectual arrogance, while

		<p>money represents the illusion of justification and control.</p> <p>Psychologically, they are extensions of Raskolnikov's internal aggression and his failed attempt to impose logic over feelings.</p>
Light and Darkness	<p>Raskolnikov's emotional states are characterized by constant shifts between light and dark imagery, particularly during moments of confession and guilt.</p>	<p>Darkness and light function as symbolic mirrors of his consciousness. Light symbolizes truth, revelation, and hope; in contrast, darkness represents fear, guilt, and denial. The alternation between the two represents his unstable mental state and his gradual progress toward redemption.</p>

Table 6 illustrates research that links symbolic elements to psychological processes, showing how external objects and images embody Raskolnikov's internal states

In this third table, the symbolic components of Crime and Punishment are fundamental tools for understanding Raskolnikov's psychological development. Each symbol acts as an external reflection of his internal states, transforming abstract feelings into tangible representations. The cross, for example, is one of the most important emblems, as it symbolizes

Raskolnikov's spiritual rebirth and moral reconstitution. When Sonia gives him the cross, she symbolically offers him the path to redemption, not through intellectual justification, but through emotional acceptance. From Sigmund Freud's perspective, this moment demonstrates the superego's (the moral conscience's) overcoming of the ego in its attempt to rationalize guilt. Thus, the cross becomes a religious and psychological symbol that reflects Dostoevsky's idea that personal salvation can only begin when the individual assumes moral responsibility.

The city of St. Petersburg acts as a living mirror of Raskolnikov's mental state. His psychological suffocation manifests itself in the oppressive atmosphere, marked by noise, heat, and moral decay. Dostoevsky intentionally constructs the city as an externalization of the protagonist's unconscious: desolation, disorder, and filth of the streets reflect his inner anguish. This connection demonstrates, from a psychological perspective, the concept of projection, which refers to how the mind projects its internal chaos onto the external world. In this way, the city becomes a prison, both physical and mental, intensifying the isolation and anxiety that permeate Raskolnikov's life.

The frequent images of thresholds and doorways also possess profound psychological significance. Raskolnikov faces an ethical dilemma that tests his self-control and conscience every time he approaches a door. His hesitation before entering the pawnbroker's apartment, Sonia's room, or the police station represents the boundary between denial and moral conscience. These moments, from a psychological perspective, represent the struggle between repression and acknowledgment: each threshold crossed is a step toward acceptance and truth. Likewise, the instruments of the crime, the axe and the money, function as symbolic extensions of his divided mind: repressed anger and violence are symbolized by the axe, while pride and rational control

are symbolized by the money. Together, they illustrate the destructive effects of dissociating morality from emotion.

The struggle between darkness and light ultimately reflects the rhythm of Raskolnikov's mental transformation. Darkness predominates at the beginning of the novel, revealing his confusion and guilt; on the other hand, as he accepts his conscience and seeks redemption, light gradually emerges. In psychological terms, light is a symbol of consciousness, which is the process of becoming aware of repressed emotions. Conversely, darkness symbolizes the forces of unconscious fear and denial. Through this interplay, Dostoevsky transforms visual imagery into a dynamic portrait of mental regeneration.

These symbols, taken together, constitute an interconnected system that reveals the depth of Dostoevsky's psychological acuity. The novel's material elements, such as images, settings, and objects, are not merely decorative; they are essential for understanding the mental processes that determine Raskolnikov's transformation. Each symbol represents a phase of his inner development, from repression and moral blindness to rebirth and confession. In this way, the use of symbolism establishes a link between psychology and literature, revealing how Dostoevsky embodies the hidden complexity of human emotions in visible forms imbued with profound meaning.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

This conclusion aims to summarize the fundamental ideas developed during the research. This analysis focused on Crime and Punishment from a psychological perspective, and the conclusion seeks to show how each chapter contributed to understanding Raskolnikov's inner world. The theoretical framework, from the outset, explained the relationship between literature and psychology and why it is possible to extract a deeper meaning from a character's actions by analyzing their mind. The methodology described how the data was collected and organized to ensure a reliable and clear analysis. The analysis of each section of the study demonstrates that the conclusion highlights the path followed to arrive at the conclusions about the character's psychological transformation.

Furthermore, the conclusion seeks to detail how the research objectives were successfully achieved. The study, employing the psychological method, revealed that Raskolnikov's contradictions, unstable emotions, and thoughts manifest a profound internal conflict that affects all his decisions. The analysis also revealed that his ethical conflicts, particularly his conviction of being superior to others, create a constant struggle between his pride and his conscience. In conclusion, the findings corroborated that guilt becomes the primary driving force behind his transformation, compelling him to confess and redeem himself. The conclusion, which summarizes these findings, highlights the importance of examining not only the characters' actions but also their emotions and reflections.

This conclusion ultimately seeks to underscore the importance of literature as a mirror of authentic human experiences. Dostoevsky's work demonstrates that psychological suffering can

destroy an individual from within if they fail to assume their moral responsibility. At the same time, the novel teaches that accepting the truth and facing the consequences can lead to change and healing. This research showed that fiction can help readers understand the complexity of human behavior by combining personal interpretation with expert theories and literary evidence. Thus, the study concludes that it not only analyzes a literary character but also examines the universal emotions and struggles that many people experience in real life.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 To examine how inner thoughts, emotional instability, and contradictory behaviors reflect a deep psychological conflict and contribute to his mental breakdown

The collected evidence consistently demonstrates that Raskolnikov's mental process begins long before the crime and is fundamental to his psychological deterioration. His internal monologues, his recurring doubts about his "right" to kill, and his intellectual explanations were documented and classified in Table 1. This table illustrates how rationalization (the effort of the rational consciousness to control conflict) systematically clashes with spontaneous emotional responses such as fever, anxiety attacks, isolation, and nightmares. These components are not isolated incidents but rather indicators of an intrapsychic conflict: the tension between the rational aspiration (ego) and the moral voice (superego), which, according to the study and the sources examined, ultimately overwhelms his capacity for control and leads to episodes of behavioral disorganization. In practical terms, the conclusion is that the novel presents crime as the product of a continuous mental process; the external action merely manifests an internal fracture that was already occurring.

From a more interpretive perspective, linking theory and text, the pattern of contradictions (behaving with superiority while seeking solace) reveals that Raskolnikov is not a cold and calculating person, but rather someone torn between remorse and impulse. His interpretation—based on the painting, as well as quotations and analysis of the documents suggests that these contradictions demonstrate a failed attempt at self-affirmation: by refusing to integrate his guilt, his mind generates behaviors that lead him to an indirect confession (the search for Sonia, moments of empathy, verbal self-criticism). The objective conclusion is clear: contradictory behavior and emotional instability are not side effects, but psychological processes that reveal and accelerate the character's mental deterioration.

5.2.2 To identify the ethical dilemmas Raskolnikov experiences, especially the conflict between his belief in being above the law and the moral consequences of his actions

The analysis reveals that the theory of "extraordinary men" operates, both in the text and in its interpretation, as a kind of intellectual mask that seeks to rationalize moral transgression. Table 2 shows that this belief initially serves as a rational basis for his behavior: Raskolnikov uses philosophical arguments to justify his actions. However, his subsequent reactions, fear, repulsion, disgust at the consequences of the crime, and anguish in Porfiry's presence, demonstrate that a theoretical framework cannot override internal morality (conscience). The essential result is that the work shows the psychological impossibility of justifying harm to others for exceptional or utilitarian reasons; internal ethics is established as a crucial element of psychological suffering.

Furthermore, the triangulation (text + experts + interpretation) reveals that the intellectual conflict not only explains the motive for confrontation but also demonstrates Raskolnikov's psychological fragility: his theory distances him from empathy and leads him to isolation. This,

in turn, increases his guilt and self-sabotage. Furthermore, the triangulation (text, experts, their interpretation) reveals that the intellectual conflict not only explains the reason for the confrontation but also demonstrates Raskolnikov's psychological fragility: his theory distances him from empathy and leads him to isolation; this, in turn, increases guilt and self-sabotage.

5.2.3 To interpret how his growing guilt and desire for redemption lead to changes in his mindset, guiding him from denial to acceptance and, ultimately, to transformation

The data and analysis presented in Table 3 indicate that guilt functions as a transformative force: it not only punishes but also motivates the individual to reflect and open emotionally to change. Dreams, instability, and the bond with Sonya are the elements that foster this process, as noted in the critical observations and references of the essay. In the novel, the acknowledgment of guilt and the acceptance of punishment (prison or exile) initiate a mental reconfiguration. From a psychological perspective, accepting guilt allows the rational and moral elements of the personality to integrate, leading to a new existential perspective and new attitudes. Therefore, the result is that guilt, felt alongside suffering and empathy, becomes the path to achieving inner reconciliation and moral change.

From the critical analysis and the theories used in the novel, it also emerges that redemption in *Crime and Punishment* is neither a magical nor merely religious act: it is a complex psychological dynamic that demands recognition, humiliation, acceptance, and connection between human beings (embodied in Sonya). Raskolnikov's evolution is gradual and ambivalent; it is not an instantaneous restoration, but a progressive process of individuation, through which the responsibility he assumes allows for the reconstruction of his identity. This validates the third objective of the research: that the transition from denial to confession and

acceptance constitutes a cognitive-affective trajectory that explains his transformation and that can be described and documented with the data presented in the tables.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

This study posed the following research question: How does Dostoevsky use Raskolnikov's search for meaning to represent human struggles with right, wrong, and personal responsibility? The psychological analysis conducted throughout the research successfully answered this question. By analyzing Raskolnikov's thoughts, fears, and conflicts, it was demonstrated that his search for meaning motivates him to commit the crime and subsequently forces him to confront the emotional consequences of his actions. Dostoevsky employs Raskolnikov's mind as the main stage of the story, illustrating how an individual can self-destruct by attempting to evade their moral obligations. The novel demonstrates that the human struggle between good and evil is expressed primarily in the conscience, not just in actions.

This research successfully answered the research question, demonstrating how Raskolnikov attempts to prove that his life has a particular purpose, considering himself superior to traditional morality. However, once the crime is committed, he realizes that the guilt is more intense than any theory he devised to justify his actions. The novel teaches, through his psychological crisis, that the meaning of life lies not in superiority or violence, but in honesty, acceptance of the truth, and establishing connections with others. The analysis revealed that Dostoevsky portrays the search for meaning as an arduous and painful process in which individual responsibility stands as the only authentic path to peace and change. The universal experience of facing the consequences of our decisions is symbolized by his downfall and recovery.

The analysis of this study concludes that the research question was addressed comprehensively, employing specialized theories, the researcher's interpretation, and literary evidence to understand the character's development. Dostoevsky makes Raskolnikov a symbol of every human being who seeks purpose in the face of moral dilemmas. The results indicated that the character's journey, from pride to guilt and ultimately to redemption, serves as an example to illustrate how everyone must confront the conflict between conscience and ego. Therefore, the question has not only been answered but is also supported by solid evidence: Dostoevsky uses Raskolnikov's search for meaning to show that true personal worth is achieved when one chooses to take responsibility for their actions and act in accordance with what is ethically right, despite the pain.

5.4 Unexpected Results

Throughout the analysis, it was unexpectedly discovered that human connection plays a fundamental role in Raskolnikov's search for meaning. Initially, the study focused solely on his thoughts and the psychological theories that explained his inner conflict. However, the findings revealed that his transformation does not occur in isolation. Figures like Sonia become crucial to his emotional and moral awakening. Her patience, faith, and empathy offer him the opportunity to forgive, something he could not achieve through reason alone. This discovery shows that Dostoevsky presents redemption not only as an individual process but also as an effect of love and understanding of others. This provides a new perspective on the story, demonstrating that human relationships are essential for overcoming guilt and finding a moral purpose.

Another surprising revelation was how physical pain became a key component of Raskolnikov's psychological crisis. The initial idea was to examine only the emotional and

mental elements, but the book demonstrates beyond doubt that his fear and guilt hurt his body. After the murder, he experiences weakness, fever, loss of consciousness, and even hallucinations. These symptoms demonstrate that the body manifests internal conflicts and that immoral actions are not limited to the mind. This finding contributed to a better understanding of the character, revealing that Dostoevsky uses physical responses to highlight the power of conscience and the impossibility of evading the truth. While not an initial objective of the study, it became an essential part of the final interpretation.

Finally, the study discovered that Raskolnikov is driven not only by arrogance or ambition but also by a fear of insignificance and insecurity. Before the research, the character might have seemed confident in his uniqueness. However, the study revealed that these concepts stem from a fear of leading an empty life. His behavior does not demonstrate strength but rather a weakness disguised as superiority. This surprising result demonstrates that his crime was not simply an attempt to test a theory but also a desperate search for something different and valuable. This research, with this discovery, adds a more intense emotional dimension and reveals that the novel examines the human fear of failure and the need to feel relevant.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the results of this literary analysis, it is suggested that future studies continue to investigate psychological analysis in literature, as this method was fundamental to understanding the depth of Raskolnikov's inner conflict. The hidden meanings behind his behavior were discerned through the application of Jungian and Freudian theories, but many other psychological approaches could offer valuable insights. For example, integrating cognitive psychology or behavioral analysis could help clarify how learned behavior and distorted thinking

affect decisions. Researchers can also examine how fear of failure, trauma, or social pressure contributes to his crisis, especially given the hostile environment of St. Petersburg. Broadening the range of theories would enrich the interpretation of characters in this and other works, demonstrating how literature connects with real-world mental processes.

Promoting a psychological perspective in education is another recommendation, as it helps students develop critical and emotional thinking skills while reading. Readers can draw connections between these experiences and their own lives when they understand the characters' fear, guilt, or confusion, making the learning process more meaningful. Teachers could create exercises in which students recognize a character's internal conflict and relate it to common human situations, such as making difficult decisions or facing the consequences. This type of academic work fosters reflection, collaboration, and empathy, while also improving interpretive skills and reading comprehension. Education focuses on understanding not only knowledge but also human behavior and the value of individual responsibility when psychology is used in literature classes.

Finally, it is suggested that future research conduct a more extensive and varied analysis of secondary characters and how they influence the protagonist's development. In this analysis, Raskolnikov's internal experiences were the focus; however, figures such as Sonia, Porfiry, and his mother play a crucial role in his transformation. His confession and transformation are profoundly influenced by their support, pressure, or moral guidance. Examining how relationships influence psychological development could help readers understand that personal transformation doesn't occur in isolation, but rather through connection with other human beings. It would also be useful to analyze Raskolnikov's trajectory in comparison with other literary characters grappling with moral dilemmas or guilt; to examine how different cultures and eras

portray redemption. Such future studies would demonstrate the enduring relevance of Dostoevsky's message and how literature continues to help us reflect on who we are and who we aspire to be.

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